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PRINCETON, N. J.

Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.

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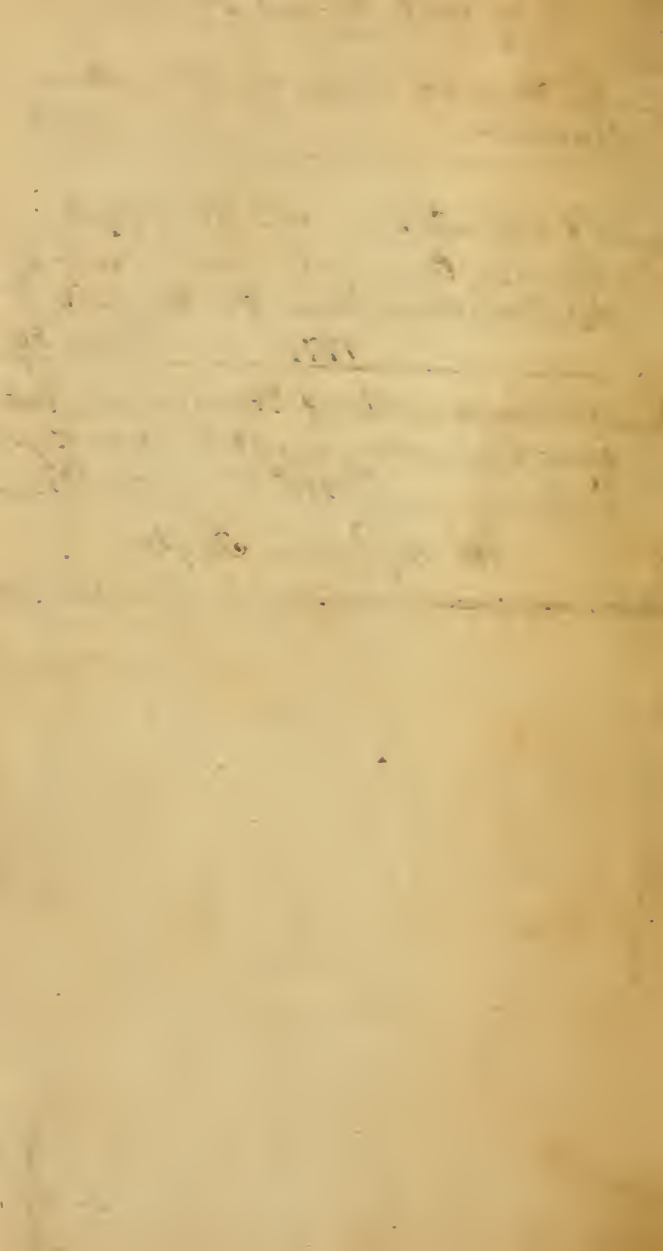
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- All By Dan Taylor
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AN
HUMBLE ESSAY
ON
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.
THE SECOND EDITION.
WITH
TWO LETTERS
TO THE
Rev. STEPHEN ADDINGTON,
CONCERNING THE
SUBJECTS AND MODE
OF
BAPTISM.

By DAN TAYLOR.

*“ As we must take heed that we do not add the Fancies
of Men to our divine Religion, so we should take equal Care
that we do not curtail the Appointments of CHRIST.”*

Dr. Watts’s Humble Attempt, Page 62.

L O N D O N :

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G. KEITH, Gracechurch-Street; E. and C. DILLY, Poultry;
T. VALLANCE, Cheap-side; and J. MATHEWS, Strand.

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A N
HUMBLE ESSAY
O N
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM:

OFFERED TO THE

CONSIDERATION OF UPRIGHT INQUIRERS,

Concerning the Subjects, and proper Manner of

ADMINISTERING, THIS ORDINANCE.

By D A N T A Y L O R.

The SECOND EDITION, Corrected.

*If the Truth is at any Time shaken or uncertain, it beboves the
Priests of God, who would observe the divine Commands,
to look back to the divine evangelic Origin, and apostolic
Tradition.*

Cypr. Epist. ad Pomp. contra Steph. pag. 195.

*To teach all Nations what of him they learn'd
And his Salvation: them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent Stream* —

Milt. B. xii. L. 440.

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C. DILLY, Poultry ; T. VALLANCE, Cheapside ;
and J. MATTHEWS, Strand.

MDCCLXXVII.



ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THIS tract was written and published nine years ago; and the first impression of it was sold off soon after it's publication, so that there has not been one copy unfold, that I know of, for many years; though there have been many demands for it. My settled reluctance to meddle in controversy, and my various other concerns have hitherto prevailed with me not to revise it for a second edition. But the late agitation of the subject, with the advice of friends; have prevailed with me to suffer it, a second time, to see light. I trust it is not dictated by malevolence and bitterness of spirit. These can do no good, but much harm. I have ventured to subjoin my name to this second edition. I am assuredly persuaded that the doctrine

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trine of believers baptism is founded in the word of eternal truth, and that it is a matter of no small importance. Yet, I hope, if any one should think it worth his while to animadvert on this small tract with meekness of spirit, I shall be willing to attend to what he advances, and to retract whatever he shall disprove. I pray God that truth and peace may reign more and more, and that every tradition of men, may be banished from the christian world! The *Strictures on Mr. Addington's Summary* are thought to be a proper Supplement, as the reader will be able to refer to this tract with ease, and at no great expence; and it is supposed, will here find a sufficient answer to the objections he offers against the practice herein vindicated. Should any one chuse to consider it more largely, I wish the blessing of God may accompany his labors.

HIRST, WADSWORTH,

June 24, 1777.

D. T.

THE

P R E F A C E.

THE design of this Essay is mentioned in the beginning of it, and hinted at in the title-page; to which the reader is intreated to attend. It is very lamentable indeed, that the church of Christ hath so long been distressed and torn by angry quarrels and contentions; and the author should be very sorry to do any thing by which these are likely to be increased or continued. Yet if providence calls him (which he supposes to be the case at present,) to defend any part of what he thinks is gospel truth or duty, he is persuaded the character he bears, and obligations he is under to the blessed Redeemer, and to precious souls, demand it of him. He is very certain this is best done, not by irritating the passions, but convincing the judgments of those who are otherwise minded. He has therefore been studious to avoid the former, how deficient soever he may have been in the latter; and hopes none will find any just cause of offence in the following pages. The chief request he would make to the reader is, that he would impartially examine the scriptures with regard to the ordinance of baptism, and regard this pamphlet, as far as will be found consistent with them; but no farther. He has long thought, and still thinks, that would every one, according to his ability, act thus, and not take things from others without examination, it would greatly tend to the promotion both of truth and peace. And O! what

would we not give, what would we not suffer, to promote these? He knows the doctrine and practice of believers baptism is contrary to the carnal mind; yet this, he imagines, is no proof of its being unscriptural; but rather the contrary. For the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. He remembers a time when he was very willing to embrace this ordinance; but he is very conscious, that it was not because he could not find it recommended in the bible, but because it was contrary to the disposition of all those, except one, among whom he laboured, as well as most of those with whom he then was, or ever had been, acquainted. He would therefore gladly have found arguments against it, strong enough to overturn it. With this view, he read several authors on the contrary side. But he asks leave to say, that he met with nothing in them, towards, what he could call scripture-proof of the validity of infant-baptism: all he met with was mortifying disappointment. Being conscious he had to do with a heart-searching God, he was determined to act uprightly. He therefore procured the reading of a pamphlet or two written in vindication of believers baptism, which much confirmed him in the sense he had before put on the scriptures in reading them. Though contrary to his friends, therefore, he ventured to stand up as an advocate for it. His reasons for so doing, may be learnt, from the following pages, which he recommends to the candid, and prays that a divine blessing may attend them, while he subscribes himself a lover of truth and peace, and, to the utmost of his power, a servant of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

A N

HUMBLE ESSAY, &c.

THOUGH it appears so very clear that the baptism of believers is recommended in scripture, both by precept and precedent, yet many, who, as appears by this their conduct, do not sufficiently regard that sacred book, deride those who practise it. Hereby some sincere Christians who would *follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth*, are often confused in their ideas, and distressed in their minds, if not misguided in their practice. It may be allowed, that very much cannot well be said, more than has before been said on this subject; yet it is hoped, that could a few thoughts, in easy and familiar language, suited to the capacities of common readers, be once more offered to view, it might, under the blessing of God, have a happy tendency to discover the error of those vain persons, who, alas! delight in reproaching what they know little of; to satisfy some inquiring souls, and establish some weak minds, with regard to this ordinance. With this view the following remarks are humbly, and in the spirit of meekness, submitted to consideration.

I. As baptism is an ordinance of so great importance, and so universally allowed to be enjoined us in the oracles of truth, it must be the indispensable duty of both ministers and people, impartially to examine what is meant by it, and to whom it ought to be administered.—Of ministers, lest they be found guilty of *changing the ordinance of God,** and of *teaching for doctrines of God, the commandments of men:†* and of the people, lest their *fear towards God, be taught merely by man's precept.§*

II. The scriptures are a *perfect ‡* rule, and they are our *only ||* rule of judgment concerning truth and falsehood, right and wrong, in all matters of religion, whether respecting faith or practice. We may not be allowed, under any pretence whatever, to follow any man, or men, in the world, farther than they derive from, and found upon, these, so far as we can judge, *all* they teach to others, and observe themselves.

III. We learn from this blessed book, that there is but *one baptism *** belonging to the church of *Christ*. Now this *one baptism*, is either dipping or sprinkling, or some kind of act that includes both these. That dipping and sprinkling are two distinct and different acts, is indisputable; and how these two different acts, can be but *one baptism*, I cannot yet discover. Now if they cannot, there are

* Isai. xxiv. 5.

§ Isai. xxix. 13.

|| Isai. viii. 20.

† Mark vii. 7.

‡ 2 Tim. iii. 15., 16, 17.

** Ephes. iv. 5.

either two baptisms, or one of these is no baptism. That there are not two baptisms is evident: that *immersion* is proper baptism I believe none will deny: but if so, the consequence must be, that sprinkling is no baptism. Should it be said, as it sometimes has been, that to baptize signifies to wash, in general, (which seems quite destitute of proof) it must be replied, that sprinkling is not washing. I suppose no man of Judgment and candor, will say the word βαπτίζω properly means to sprinkle; and if not, sprinkling cannot be baptism.* It is possible this may be clearer by adding,

IV. Whatever is not implied in the import of the word our *Lord* made use of, when he gave the commission to baptize; and whatever did not attend the observance of that commission, among the disciples, cannot now belong to the administration of that ordinance. On the other hand, whatever is the precise import of the word our *Lord* used, and whatever was the practice of the *apostles*, in obedience to our *Lord's* commission, this, and no other, can be the proper way of ad-

* It may be proper here to observe, that *Magnus* evidently sets washing in opposition to perfusion, which is nearer to washing than sprinkling is; when, writing to *Cyprian*, he asks whether those who (*non loti sunt, sed perfusi*) had not been washed, but had water poured upon them, might be esteemed lawful christians. *Apud. Cypr. Epist. 76. pag. 211.* And I own, I have often wondered how any can say that baptism is washing, and yet pretend that they baptize, when they only use aspersion.

ministering the ordinance. None of us can deny this, who allow that our *Lord* used such words as were suited to convey to us a full and exact idea of his meaning, and that the *apostles* acted in strict obedience to them.

V. It clearly appears, both from the sense in which the sacred penmen use the same word, from the constant practice of *John* and of the *apostles*, and from some other circumstances, that the ordinance of baptism never was, nor can be properly administered any other way than by immersion. The sense of the word βαπτίζω, which is rendered to *baptize*, proves this. I am persuaded there is no passage in the sacred oracles, in which it can fairly be interpreted, as signifying to *sprinkle*, nor to wash any other way than by dipping. The *seventy* use it twice;* once in a literal sense,

as

* Βαπτίζω is only used twice by the *seventy*; but βαπτω, of which βαπτίζω is known to be a derivative, many times. And tho' I think them nearly synonymous, yet because some seem unwilling to allow it, and for the sake of brevity, I pass them by. Yet I believe every place where the word is found, if duly examined, would tend to prove the validity of *immersion*. The reader may consult the following passages, where some branch of the word is found. *Ex.* xii. 22. *Lev.* iv. 16, 17. ix. 9, xiv. 6, 16, 51. *Numb.* xix. 18. *Deut.* xxxiii. 24. *Josh.* iii. 15. *Ruth.* ii. 14. *1 Sam.* xiv. 27. *2 Kin.* viii. 15. *Job* ix. 31. *Psal.* lxviii. 23. *Ezek.* xxiii. 15. *Dan.* iv. 33. v. 21. In all these places, except three, (viz. *Pf.* lxviii. 23. *Dan.* iv. 33. v. 21.) we have the word טביל, in the Hebrew. And in these three, we have the strong and expressive word, מרחץ, *percussit, intinxit, immerfit*; and the Chaldee word, רבץ *intinxit, immerfit, &c.* which, when compared

as 2 *Kin.* v. 14. and once in a metaphorical ; as *Isa.* xxi. 4. The former is translated *dip* ; which is the known and constant sense of the *hebrew* word there used, and needs no comment.* The latter place is by our translators, according to the *hebrew*, rendered *fearfulness affrighted me*. The *seventy*, in order, as it seems to express the deep calamity about to come upon *Babylon* for her sin, using the strong word, which, in the new Testament denotes Christian baptism, read it *iniquity overwhelms*, or *sinks*, or *plunges* † me, i. e. into deep sorrow or distress. How strongly this proves that the word properly means to *dip* or to *immerse*, I think any one may see, who understands what we mean by saying a person is overwhelmed with fear, or sunk in sorrow : especially if he remembers that our blessed Redeemer's prodigious sufferings are expressed by the word here used by the *seventy*. I know not whether it can be of any use even to the most ignorant reader, to cite the places in the new Testament where the ordinance of baptism is mentioned, and this same word used. If it will, he may consult the following. *Mat.* iii. 6, 11, 13, 14, 16. xxviii. 19. *Mark* i.

compared with 2 *Kin.* v. 14. is, I think, a very considerable proof, first, that βαπτω and βαπτίζω are pretty near synonymous. 2dly, That the proper sense of βαπτίζω is to dip. We have the word βαπτω in the new Testament, in *Luke* xvi. 24. *John* xiii. 26. *Rev.* xix. 13. From which places, we may learn its proper sense, if we had no other means of knowing it.

* טביל, *intinxit, demersit, immerfit*. Buxtorf, in voce.

† η ανωμεν με βαπτίζω.

4, 5, 8, 9. xvi. 16. *Luke* iii. 7, 12, 21. vii. 29, 30. *John* iii. 22, 23. iv. i. 2. x. 40. *Acts* i. 5. ii. 38, 41. viii. 12, 13, 16, 36, 38. ix. 18. x. 47, 48. xi. 16. xvi. 15, 33. xviii. 8. xix. 3, 4, 5. xxii. 16. *Rom.* vi. 3. *1 Cor.* i. 13, 14, 15, 16. *Gal.* iii. 27. One would think an impartial reader, when he meets with these passages, and finds the same word here used, which in the *old Testament* is translated *dip*, must think it, at least, very probable, that this is the meaning of the word here too. And as this conclusion is quite natural in itself, so, I doubt not, it will be abundantly confirmed by a candid and impartial examination of every passage in the new Testament, where this word occurs*.

VI. In some places the same word is used in reference to Jewish customs; by attending to which, we may be assisted in judging of the import of the word, and the proper manner of administering the ordinance. They are *Mar.* vii. 4. *Luke* xi. 38. *Heb.* ix. 10. In the first of these, the clause *except they wash*—in the *Greek* is, *except they baptize*; upon which clause, a very judicious and justly celebrated critic remarks†, that “βαπτίζουσι

* That prophane writers constantly used the word βαπτίζω in this sense, see Dr. Gale's *Reflections on Dr. Wall's History of Infant Baptism*. Letter 3d. I could wish that learned gentleman had written that valuable book with a little more modesty.

† Beza in loc, and compare his note on *Matth.* iii. 11. And see also to the same purpose, the notes of the learned Dr. Hammond, and Junius, and Erasmus's Paraphrase in loc. “here,

“ here, is more than *χερσπιπτειν*; for the former
 “ seems to respect the whole body, the latter
 “ only the hands. Nor does *βαπτιζειν* signify
 “ to wash, except by consequence, for it pro-
 “ perly signifies to *immerse*,” &c. Which re-
 mark may, I think, be confirmed, and it will
 appear that the washing here mentioned, was
 certainly dipping, by observing, 1. That the
 Greek word is very different from *νιπφοιλας*, 7
 used ver. 3, to signify washing the hands. 2.
 That it is plain from the books of *Leviticus*
 and *Numbers*, that the Jews did actually dip
 or bathe themselves in water, when ceremoni-
 ally unclean; and even by divine appoint-
 ment. Now they supposed, or pretended
 themselves thus unclean, when they had been
 at the *market* or *court*. 3. As this was one of
 their superstitions, it is very unreasonable to
 suppose that the superstition which excited
 them to it, would not also lead them to do it
 in the common manner, authorised by their
 law. 4. In the same verse mention is made of
 the *washings* (in the Greek, *baptisms*) of *cups*,
brazen vessels, and *tables*, or *couches*. Now it
 is expressly commanded, that when any ves-
 sel, &c. is unclean, it shall be put into the
 water. *Lev. xi. 32.* The *seventy* read it—
shall be DIPPED in the water; and Mr. *Ains-*
worth has clearly shewn from *Maimonides*, on
 this text, that, “ Wheresoever the law speaks
 “ of washing a person’s flesh, or cloaths, or
 “ any vessel for uncleanness, it is done no
 “ other way than by dipping.” Other learned
 men

men have shewn evidently that the Jews actually immersed themselves in water, when they had been at the market, and did in the same manner dip their vessels, when they esteemed them unclean*. When these things are impartially attended to, this text must appear an incontestible proof, that the word in question, in this place, properly signifies to *dip*. This will help us to understand, *Luke xi. 38.* where we are told *the Pharisee marvelled that our Lord had not washed* (in the Greek *baptized*) *before dinner*. And two of the writers just referred to†, have shewn that the more superstitious *Jews*, (of which sort this *Pharisee* seems to be one) really dipped their *whole body* in water, even before dinner; and the other *Jews* dipped their hands, in order to wash them; which indeed is the common manner of washing the hands even to this day. This text therefore, must be an additional proof that the word βαπτίζω, signifies to *dip*; and consequently that baptism cannot be administered by sprinkling. The third text mentioned, is *Heb. ix. 10.* where the apostle speaks of *divers washings* (in the Greek *baptisms or bathings*) clearly pointing to the various occasions on which the *Jews* used to dip themselves, their vessels, &c. in water, mentioned above. Also the different persons,

* See *Ainsworth* on *Lev. xi. 32. xv. 5.* Dr. *Gill's* Reply to Mr. *Clark*, p. 71—73. and Dr. *Gale's* Reflections, p. 159—167.

† Dr. *Gill* and Dr. *Gale*, *ut supra*.

as *priests, levites, and common Israelites*, who, on these occasions, purified themselves; of which we read so much in the Jewish law, and which the Jewish writers assert to have been practised by them*.

VII. In some places the same word is used figuratively; but these may assist us in examining its sense. As *Matt. xx. 22, 23. Luke xii. 50. Luke iii. 16. Acts i. 5. 1 Cor. x. 2.*

The two first of these texts speak of our blessed *Lord's* sufferings, which he calls a *baptism*; the reason and force of which, will appear, by considering how very great these sufferings were, and how common it is to say, a person in great trouble, is plunged in sorrow, or overwhelmed with distress. And this manner of speaking is quite agreeable to scripture, compare *Psalms lxi. 2.* Now these distresses of our Lord are evidently called a baptism, because, as a person, when baptized by *John* and the *apostles*, was plunged into the water, and consequently overflowed with it, so our *Lord* was, as it were, overwhelmed and overflowed with, and plunged into, distresses, or sorrows, for us poor sinners. Any one must see, that sprinkling a little water on the face, can be no representation at all, of such unpa-

* See many places in *Lev. xv. xvi. xvii. xix. &c. Ainsworth on Lev. xi. 32. xv. 5, 11. Dr. Lightfoot on the Temple, chap. 37. sect. 1. Sir John Floyer's History of Cold Bathing, p. 4. Dr. Gill against Mr. Clark, and Dr. Whitby in loc.*

ralleled sufferings. But if our Lord's words be true, they are represented by baptism; and it will therefore necessarily follow, that sprinkling is not baptism.

Luke iii. 16. *Acts* i. 5. where the baptism of the Holy Ghost is mentioned, point to that exceeding large effusion of *spiritual gifts*, mentioned *Acts* ii. 2—5, at which time, the *sacred historian* informs us, *the sound filled the house where they were sitting*; consequently they were surrounded with it, and, as it were, immersed in the midst of it, as a person, when baptized, is surrounded with, and immersed in the water, *and were filled with the Holy Ghost*, ver. 4. These strong expressions seem intirely to lose their force and energy, when compared with *sprinkling*; but clearly retain it, when compared to immersion. The last of these texts is, *1 Cor.* x. 2.—baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea; referring to the situation of the *Israelites* in the *Red Sea*, mentioned *Exod.* xiv. 19—23. where we are informed that the waters were a wall to them on both sides; and it appears the *cloud* was over them. But at the same time, *they went over on dry ground*; and that part of the cloud which was over them, was bright and *gave light to them*, while it was *dark* to the *Egyptians*, v. 20. These things shew that there was no water poured or sprinkled on them, either from the cloud or sea. To which it may be added, that, had this been the case, it could not have been said, with truth or propriety,

(as

(as it is here) that they were baptized *in*, it must rather have been said *from*, or *by*, the cloud and sea. Nor can it fairly be asked, "Were they dipt in the cloud?" for any one can see, they were as much *dipt* as *sprinkled* in the cloud; and the text does not *simply* say, they were baptized in the *cloud*; but in the cloud, and in the sea; because, being between, and below, the walls of the sea, and covered with the cloud, they were, as it were, immersed, or buried, in, or under, both; and so represented a person who is, according to the *apostle's* language, - *buried with Christ in baptism**, alluding, as most, if not all, commentators of note, acknowledge, to the "ancient manner of baptizing by immersion." And indeed sprinkling has no resemblance of a burial. The words of the apostle, therefore, compared with the passage to which they refer, are an additional proof, that the word βαπτίζω properly signifies to *dip* or *immerse*; and consequently that baptism is not properly administered, but by *immersion*. And this truth is confirmed by the general concession of commentators, I have just now mentioned. Surely the ancient way of baptizing, namely, the way of our Lord and his apostles, is the

* *Rom.* vi. 4. *Col.* ii. 12. Sir John Floyer says, that the *French King's* baptisteries, built in the time of *Clodoveus*, in all which they used immersion, had steps, by which they descended as into a sepulchre; because, adds he, it is said we are buried with Christ in *baptism*. *Hist. of Cold Baths*, p. 55.

true way; and why should we chuse, or attempt to defend one different from it? Allowing that sprinkling is one method of baptizing, (than which, I firmly believe, nothing is more contrary to truth) yet surely the method that was attended to by our blessed and adorable *Master*, which is, on all hands, allowed to be immersion, may be sufficient for us his unworthy servants. And I cannot but stand amazed, that every real lover of the dear *Redeemer*, (suppose there were two methods) does not long, yea, is not determined, to observe that which he knows his dear *Saviour* observed before him.

VIII. The places where *John* and *Philip* baptized, and their going *into*, and coming *cut of*, the water, would prove, if it were disputed, that they baptized by *immersion*. The multitudes were baptized *in the river of Jordan* *; and *our Lord*, *in* (or *into*) *Jordan* †. *John* baptized in *Enon*, for this very reason, because *there was much water there* ‡. This surely could not have been the reason of *John's* baptizing here, had *sprinkling* been baptism, as well as immersion; since any place, capable of

* *Mark* i. 5.

† Verse 9. εις τον Ιορδανην. When these words are read, one would wonder that any should think of taking advantage at the ambiguity of the preposition *επι*. If Jesus was baptized *into Jordan*, he must needs come out of it.

‡ *John* iii. 23. That *υδατα πολλα* denotes a large quantity of water, see Dr. Doddridge *in loc.* That *John* dipped the persons in it, is allowed and asserted both by *Piscator* and Dr. *Whitby in loc.*

being

being inhabited, will afford water sufficient for sprinkling vast numbers. It must therefore intimate, not only that *John dipped* these persons, but that no other method would answer his end: consequently that *sprinkling* is not proper *baptism*. *Philip* also baptized the *Eunuch*, in a *certain water*, into which they *first both went down*, both *Philip and the Eunuch*. A sufficient proof that the *Eunuch* was baptized by *immersion* *.

IX. Many very learned men, both of former and later ages, and even many of those, who have admitted of sprinkling, (wonderful and astonishing as it is to tell!) have allowed, yea, asserted and maintained, that this is the proper import of the word, and the most proper and scriptural way of administering the ordinance. To cite their words *here* would be too tedious. The authors referred to in the margin †, have done it at large: and

* *Acts* viii. 38. "It would be very unnatural," says the learned and pious Dr. *Doddridge*, "to suppose that *they went down to the water*, merely that *Philip* might take up a *little water in his hand*, to pour on the *Eunuch*. A person of his dignity had, no doubt, *many vessels in his baggage*, on such a journey, through so desert a country; a precaution absolutely necessary for travellers in those parts, and never omitted by them." See Dr. *Shaw's Travels*, Pref. p. 4. Dr. *Doddridge in loc.*

† *Stennet's Answer to Ruffen*, p. 145—189. *Rees* against *Walker*, p. 138—142. *Foot's little practical Discourse on Baptism*, p. 9—12. *Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bapt.* Part II. p. 370—374. 3d edit. *Gale's Reflections on Wall's Hist.* p. 191—194. *Danvers's Treatise on Baptism*, p. 192—204.

have

have shewn, that *Tertullian, Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Lactantius, Anselm, Bernard, Aquinas, Calvin, Zanchius, Alexander de Halys, Grotius, Keckerman, Daille, Morus, Estius, Curcellæus, Limborch, the Assembly of Divines, Mede, Bishop Taylor, Bishop Burnet, Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Fowler, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Cave, Dr. Towerson, Dr. Whitby, Sir Norton Knatchbull, Dr. Clark,* and many others, have, some of them asserted, the proper meaning of the word is to *dip*; others of them have shewn that the apostles and primitive church, administered this ordinance by dipping; and that dipping best suits the expressions and allusions of scripture, where baptism is mentioned or referred to. That these are unexceptionable evidences in the present case, few will doubt; and what these writers unanimously maintain, is so universally allowed by men of learning, judgment, impartiality and candor, that we need not wonder to hear that learned preceptor, *Monsr. Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux*, assert *, that, “ To baptize, signifies to plunge, as is granted by “ all the world;” nor to see him, with so much warmth and eloquence, prove, that dipping is both agreeable to scripture, and to the common practice of the church for 1300 years. Nor to hear his learned opponent so ingenuously acknowledge the weight and force of his arguments, and confess that, “ If sprink-

* Cited by *Mr. Stennet*, p. 174.

“ yet it alters it, and in some sort corrupts it ;
 “ it is a defect (says he) which spoils its lawful
 “ form *.” But I ask leave, with submission,
 to mention one thing, which is, indeed, very
 wonderful to *me*, viz. that those, who at this
 day, allow the same with the gentlemen now
 mentioned, can yet be satisfied to administer an
 ordinance of *Christ*, or encourage the admi-
 nistration of it, in a way different from the
 apostles, the primitive church, and the sense
 of the words, in which the great lawgiver
 gave the commission. This, I think, is one
 of the most marvellous things, and inexpli-
 cable mysteries, I remember to have seen or
 heard of, among those who profess an impar-
 tial regard to the *word of God*.

X. The objections some have made
 against this, seem to have no great weight in
 them. Some say, *Peter* and *John* could not
 have dipped so many in so short a time. But
 1. We know not how long *John* was in bap-
 tizing them. 2. They might *immerse* very
 near as soon as *sprinkle* them ; since the same
 form of words is used in both. 3. It is not
 said that those baptized *Acts* ii. 37—41. were
 all baptized by *Peter* † ; nor all in one day,
 as

* *Ibid*, p. 186. His opponent is said to be *Monf. de la Roque*, then pastor of the reformed church at *Roan* in *Normandy*. They were engaged in a controversy concerning the *Lord's Supper*, and the Bishop only mentions *Baptism* by way of collateral argument. See *Stennet*, p. 173—189.

† If the account given us by some of our *English historians*, be to be credited, viz. that *Auslin*, (or as others say,

as some have objected. Nor is it reasonable to suppose, that the eleven apostles, and seventy disciples, who were all ministers, would all leave this work to *Peter*: and they, all engaging in it, would but have about 36 or 37 a-piece, to baptize, which would but take up a very little part of a day. Nor could there, as others have objected, be any difficulty in procuring *proper garments for so many*: because they had only to procure each one for himself; and if one can procure one proper garment, a thousand garments may, with equal ease, be procured by a thousand persons. Besides, as a learned author* has observed, bathing was so common among the *Jews*, that we cannot think they would be without proper garments for the purpose. It seems equally void of force, to say, “The *jailor* “ could not be dipt in his house in the night, “ *Acts* xvi. 33. and therefore must needs be “ sprinkled.” For 1st, It is not uncommon for persons to bathe in their houses; especially in cases of importance. 2d, It is not probable that the jailor was baptized in his house, but the contrary. It is said, ver. 34. he brought *Paul* and *Silas* into his house, *after his baptism*; which clearly implies, that *at baptism* they were not in it. Independent of say, *Paulinus*, who lived a few years after him) in the beginning of the 7th century, baptized 10,000 in one day in the river *Swale*, it would sure be no hard matter for the apostle *Peter* to baptize 3000. See *Fuller’s Ch. Hist.* p. 66.

* Mr. Stennet against *Russer*, p. 123.]

others, therefore, this is at least, a very probable proof that the *jailor* was dipt. Nor can I doubt, from what has been said before, that he actually was dipt, if he was baptized.

To say, there is danger of *injuring the health*, in baptizing by *immersion*, seems not only too much like reflecting on the wisdom and goodness of *Christ*, the great *lawgiver* and *institutor* of the ordinance; but also contrary to the truths derived from daily observation, and constant experience. It is well known, *cold bathing* is prescribed as a remedy against a great many disorders; and in general, it has a tendency to *promote*, rather than *impair* the health. Hence a celebrated *knight*, and very learned *physician*, has ventured to fore-tell, that “ The inhabitants of *England* will re-
“ turn again to this TRUE OLD USEFUL mode
“ (i. e. baptism by immersion) when they are
“ more acquainted with the usefulness of *cold*
“ *baths*. *”

Nor

* Hist. of Cold Baths, p. 25, 80, 81. It is really amazing that any one of understanding, should be weak enough to talk of danger in the practice of immersion. *Virgil* evidently thought otherwise, when he says,

Durum a stirpe genus; natos ad flumina primum
Deferimus, sævoque gelu duramus et undis.

Æneid ix. 602:

In *English*, to this effect.

Stout are our offspring, even from the womb;
Whom, to the rivers, we convey, when born,
And there we harden in the icy stream,

And I think any impartial man will lay aside this objection,
when

Nor shall we speak more to the purpose at all, in saying, “ This is more dangerous in “ these cold countries, than it was in those “ hot ones, in which our *Lord* and his *apostles* “ travelled and laboured.” Because 1st, This is one of those (ALL) *nations* for which our Lord instituted this ordinance: and if sprinkling is not baptism, as, from what has been said, I think it clear that it is not, we ought not to change an ordinance of *Christ* for a human tradition, whatever be our situation; but leave ourselves in the hands of him, who requires us to prove ourselves his *friends*, by doing *whatsoever he commands us**. 2d, Countries much colder than this of ours, as *Muscovy*, *Livonia*, &c. are well known to baptize by immersion to this present time†. A sufficient proof that there is no danger in this practice, from the coldness of the country. 3d, This country is surely no colder now than it was two centuries ago, till which time (as we shall shew presently) baptism by immersion was certainly the constant practice in this nation. 4th, The great *physician* mentioned before, has said enough to shew, that immersion is more natural and proper, and

when he has read and considered, what Sir *John Floyer*, and Dr. *Baynard* have written on the usefulness of *Cold Baths*. Compare also *Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bapt.* part 2. p. 350—380.

* John xv. 14.

† *Floyer's Hist. of Cold Baths*, p. 12, 13, 14. *Wall's Hist.* part 2. p. 375.

less

less dangerous in *cold*, than in *hot* countries*. These things fully prove, that the coldness of the country can by no means be an argument against the practice of *immersion*.

XI. Some reader may possibly ask, from this view of things, “ How then came “ the practice of *sprinkling* to be so customa- “ ry, if the scriptures are so full and clear “ against it ?” It may be proper to fill a page with a short answer, by observing,

FIRST. Tho’ many corruptions did really prevail in the church, soon after the apostles time, yet sprinkling instead of immersion, does not appear to be one of the first. We have many clear proofs from the writers of those times, that they baptized by *immersion* †, but not a hint concerning *pouring* or *sprinkling*, till pretty far in the *third century*. *Novatus*, otherwise *Novatian* ‡, who flourished about A. D. 251, is the first instance that can be produced, (as will, on all hands, be allowed) of any, who had water poured on them instead of immer-

* Hist. of Cold Baths, p. 112.

† Vid. *Barnab. Epist. cath. cap. 11. p. 69, 70. Oxon Ed. 1685. Herm. Past. l. i. Vis. 3, § 2. ad fin. Lib. ejusdem. 7. p. 25. L. 3. Simil. 9. § 16. Oxon Ed. 1685. Just. Mart. Apol. in Opera, p. 93, 94. Colon. 1686. Tert. de Bapt. cap. 2. in Opera, p. 224. cap. 4. p. 225. cap. 13. 229. De resurrect. cap. 47. Firm. apud. Cypr. Epist. 75. p. 202, 204. aliosque multos.*

‡ The learned know what critics have said about the name of this person, whether it was *Novatus* or *Novatian*. The curious reader may see the arguments on both sides collected together, in Dr. Lardner’s *Credibility of the Gospel History*, part 2. vol. 5. p. 365—375.

sion; and this only in danger, as they supposed, of immediate death*.

SECONDLY. But though *Novatus*, now likely to die, satisfied himself with perfusion, instead of immersion, as others in the same or like condition, afterwards did; yet it is clear, the church then, did not esteem this valid baptism; for when *Cornelius* bishop of *Rome*, mentions this matter to *Fabius*, bishop of *Antioch*, he says, “ He was baptized by “ perfusion, as he lay in his bed, if *it may be* “ *called baptism.*”† A plain intimation that he doubted whether it could properly be so called or not. And afterwards‡ he says, that all the *clergy* and a great many of the laity, withstood his ordination to the *ministerial office*; “ For, “ say they, it is not lawful for any one baptized by perfusion, in his bed, in time of “ sickness, to be admitted to the office of the “ ministry.” Which we can never think they would have said, had they esteemed this

* *Corn. Epist. ad Fab. apud Euseb. H. E. L. 6. xc. 43.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ Sir *John Floyer*, when vindicating, or urging, the practice of *immersion* in *baptism*, observes that, “ When “ Christianity was first planted, the bath structures, (i. e. “ of the *Greeks* and *Romans*) were turned into temples, “ and the *piscinas* or cold baths, were called baptisteria “ by *Pliny*, junior, and in them they baptized frequently.” *Hist. of Cold Baths*, p. 63. These *Balneæ* or *baths*, are mentioned by *Suetonius* (*vit. Aug. cap. 76, 85, 94.*) and others; and the curious reader may find a more particular account of them in *Dr. Potter’s Antiquities of Greece*, vol. 2. p. 370—373, and still more circumstantial, in *Danet’s Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiq.* on the word *Balneæ*.

proper baptism. And this is still further clear from the scruples which *Magnus* mentions to *Cyprian*, when he inquires whether those who have not been washed in the water, but only had it poured on them, can be esteemed (*legitimi Christiani*) lawful Christians*. One cannot think such a question would have been proposed, had the practice been thought apostolic, or been then approved in the church.

THIRDLY. *Magnus* proposing this scruple, *Cyprian*, the first, and only person that we know of at that time, who spoke in favour of pouring, attempts rather to *excuse* than *defend* the practice; for what he says hardly looks like a defence; but is rather a proof to *me*, that he doubted whether it could be defended or no. He only speaks of it, as what God may be pleased to *allow* of, or indulge as a *compendium* or *abridgment* of baptism, (*divina compendia* are his words.) Sir *John Floyer*, has an expression concerning the *Romish church*, which I ask leave here to recite, “ The church of *Rome*, says he, hath drawn short compendiums of both sacraments. In the eucharist they use only the wafer,—and instead of immersion they introduce aspersion †.” Here it is evident, he, like *Cyprian* thought sprinkling only an *abridgment* of baptism. *Cyprian* excuses *this abridgment*, only in a case of urgent necessity. And he does not plead even in favour of *this allowance*,

* *Cyp. Epist.* 76. p. 211. *Paris* 1632.

† *Hist. of Cold Baths*, p. 15.

any command of our *Lord*, or his *apostles*, or any example of either; or any passage of the *new Testament*, which so much as favours, or admits of, such a practice: or the extensive sense of the word βαπτίζω; or even any usage of the church, *at* or *before* his writing this epistle. He mentions a passage or two, indeed, in the *old Testament*; but it is clear they have not the least relation to baptism*.

XII. However, from this weak beginning, this practice did prevail in the *church*; and was afterward admitted, yet, only in *extraordinary cases*, when very weak, confined to their beds or the like: and this only by some persons. Hence, as Dr. Gale well observes†, *Constantine* the Great, though old, and, being taken with a fit of sickness, likely to die; could not be content with it, but was baptized by *Eusebius* bishop of *Nicomedia* in the usual way‡, i. e. by *immersion*. Dr. Wall infers, (though I think, not with sufficient evidence) from the words of *Gennadius*§, that it began to be indifferent in *France*, whether immersion or perfusion was used, so soon as the

* The passages he mentions, are Numb. viii. 7. xix. 19. Ezek. xxxix. 25. † *Reflect.* p. 209.

‡ *Vit. Constant.* l. 4. c. 62.

§ *Gennadius* was bishop of *Marseilles* in *France*, and flourished about the end of the *fifth century*;—his words are, “ The person to be baptized, after his confession, “ was either wetted with the water or plunged into it.” Which words I think might have been used, if perfusion had only been admitted in some cases; though it had not been esteemed quite indifferent whether was practised. See *Bessucci's* words recited, p. 16.

fifth century: but owns he is the first writer who speaks of it as indifferent. He shews clearly that immersion was most common in *Italy* about A. D. 1260, and in *Germany*, at 1120. But it seems by the words of the council of *Cologne*, in 1536, to be then esteemed more indifferent, and the church of *Mentz* preferred *pouring* A. D. 1551. Yet so to pour as to wet both the head and shoulders*. In the year 816, it seems some in *England* attempted to introduce the practice of pouring; but by a council held in that year, under *Kenulph* king of the *Mercians*, it is enjoined, that *they shall not pour water on the infants, but shall ALWAYS dip them in the font*†. Dipping was the common way in *England* about 1422, and continued so untill the reign of *Queen Elizabeth*, as both *Sir John Floyer*, and *Dr. Wall* (as well as others) do assert, and sufficiently prove at large‡; and none can fairly deny. So that, as *Mr. Rees* justly observes§, till this time, the whole nation consisted of *Baptists*, i. e. they had all been baptized by *immersion*. *Sir John Floyer* shews, it appears to have continued still longer in *Wales* ||. However, about this time *pouring* began to prevail in *England*. It had been allowed, in case of such weakness as that the child

* See *Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bapt.* part 2. p. 360.

† *Fuller's Church History of Britain*, b. 2. p. 109, and *Wall's History*, part 2. p. 362.

‡ *Wall's Hist.* part 2. p. 364—367. *Floyer's Hist. of Cold Baths*, letter 3d.

§ *Rees* ut supra, p. 180, 181.

|| *Hist. of Cold Baths*, p. 14, 87.

was not able to bear dipping, in the offices of the church of *England*, for *public baptism*, about 50 years before; and “ It being allowed, “ says Dr. *Wall* *, to weak children (though “ strong enough to be brought to church) to “ be baptized by affusion, many fond ladies “ and gentlewomen *first*, and then by degrees, “ the common people, would obtain the favour of the *priest* to let their children pass “ for weak children.” Thus, as he afterwards observes †, “ The inclinations of the people, “ backed with the authorities of three men “ of note ‡, who now encouraged it, carried “ the practice against the *rubric*.” And I ask leave to add, evidently against the *scripture* too.

The evidence in favour of *immersion*, and against *asperision*, arising from this ingenuous acknowledgment of so learned a divine, may be confirmed by the assertion of the learned *knight* §, before mentioned; who says, that, “ in king *James*’s time, when the people grew “ peevish with all ancient ceremonies, through “ the love of novelty, and the niceness of “ parents, and the pretence of modesty, they “ laid aside immersion, which never was abrogated by any canon, but is still recommended by the present *rubric* of our church, “ which orders the child to be dipped discreetly and warily.

* Hist. part 2. p. 365. † Ib. p. 366.

‡ Calvin, *Musculus* and Dr. *Whitaker*.

§ Floyer’s Hist. of C. B. p. 61.

XIII. It may be proper to note three things here, by the way.

FIRST. That sprinkling from the fingers ends, the way now commonly used, did not obtain, even so late as A. D. 1600, the time above-mentioned; nor until above forty years after. It was only beginning, says Dr. *Wall*, at 1645, now about 123 years ago. Until then, after dipping was very near laid aside, *pouring* out of the hand, out of a ladle, or the like, was the common practice*. The plain scripture method being forsook, it is no wonder the fancies and carnal inclinations of men should turn from one thing to another. And should any one use any other methods, I cannot see how those who use *this*, can pretend to oppose them in it; because they are clearly both alike unscriptural. I am loth to offend any one of *God's* creatures, especially his ministers; but in treating of divine matters, we best manifest our *real* love, by an open-hearted endeavour, to reduce one another from pernicious errors. I therefore add, I believe there is not a person in the world, who would not allow, at least upon a little close consideration, that there is as much plain scripture for sprinkling the feet or toes, or any other part, and calling that baptism; as there is for sprinkling the *face* and calling that so. And indeed since the plain scripture method of immersion is forsaken, it matters not what be turned to,

* *Wall's Hist.* part 2. p. 360, 367.

since we can turn to nothing but what is unscriptural, until that be turned to again.

SECONDLY. The practice either of pouring or sprinkling has by no means, *ever* prevailed all over the *Christian world*; nor any part of it, but so much as does own, or has owned, the usurped power of the Pope; and so received it from him and his adherents. Those two eminent and learned writers of the *established church* before-mentioned, Sir *John Floyer* and Dr. *Wall*, as well as others, have made this fully evident. “All other Christians in the world,” says Dr. *Wall*, i. e. all in *Asia*, *Africa*, and “about a third part of *Europe*, in which third part are comprehended the Christians of *Græcia*, *Thracia*, *Servia*, *Bulgaria*, *Rascia*, *Walachia*, *Moldavia*, *Russia*, *Nigra*, *Moscovy*, &c.” do, and ever did, ordinarily, baptize by *immersion* *.

THIRDLY. We have no reason to doubt, but have considerable evidence, all circumstances, being considered, that there have been some in all ages of *Christianity*, especially in and about the vallies of *Piedmont*, who have both constantly baptized by immersion, and have baptized none but believers †.

XIV. Since this change of immersion into sprinkling, many learned writers, and some even of the clergy of the *established church*,

* Hist. of Inf. Bapt. part 2. p. 368, 376, 377.

† See and compare *Rees* against *Walker*, p. 189—202. *Gill's* Reply to *Clark*, p. 30, 31, 109, 110. *Brandt's* Hist. of the Reform. p. 12.

have lamented it, and endeavoured to retrieve the use of *immersion*, as being more agreeable to the original word βαπτίζω, the expressions of *scripture*, and the practice of the *primitive church*. These are *Sotus*, Mr. *Rogers*, Bishop *Taylor*, Sir *Norton Knatchbull*, Dr. *Towerson*, Dr. *Whitby*, &c. * who plead strenuously for the reviving of this practice, except in cases of necessity. And I must own, how any necessity can warrant our acting contrary to, or different from, *Christ* and his apostles, I cannot yet discern. These things are well enough known by persons of reading, and will be owned by persons of candor. Nor are they mentioned as proofs of the validity of immersion, and invalidity of aspersion; but only as human evidences in favour of it, and for the sake of some persons of less knowledge and understanding in these matters, who seem to think that the practice of immersion in baptism is but lately become usual. Whereas, the truth is, it is but lately laid aside for aspersion. Yet we appeal to the *word of God alone*, as the test of truth, and wish no support for our practice, if that does not support it, but shall be willing, yea glad and determined to lay it aside, if it is not authorized there: On the other hand, the authority of *God's word* is sufficient, should all the world act contrary.

I ask leave, by way of remark on what has been said, to propose to the impartial reader three questions, 1. Is it not clear from these

* *Walk's Hist.* part 2: p. 370—374.

things, that the practice of *sprinkling* is founded, chiefly at least, in the inclinations of men, rather than the word of God? 2. Is it not evident that if any of us practise, and insist on sprinkling as the proper way of baptizing, we oppose both the *word of God*, and the constant usage of the church, almost in all ages and nations, at least until a few centuries ago? 3. Is it not much *better* and *safer*, to follow the plain expressions and examples of scripture, than the inclinations or practice of any man or men in the world? It is before *God* that we are to appear hereafter; and therefore we should act as before *God* here.

SECONDLY. Who are the *proper subjects* of this sacred ordinance? To whom should it be administered? To *infants* or *believers*?

Ans. A good way to know our duty in any point, is to understand the words in which that duty is enjoined. Ministers of the gospel have but one commission in the whole book of God, with regard to this ordinance. To this commission let us return again, and inquire who are to be baptized: for we must surely all confess that only those to whom the words will fairly extend, are the proper subjects of baptism. It is exprest *Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* I take the plain meaning of
these

these words to be, " Go and teach, not in,
 " *Judea* only, but in all other countries,
 " where you shall have opportunity, what I
 " have done and suffered for a ruined world
 " and the blessings to be enjoyed through
 " what I have done and suffered, and the abso-
 " lute necessity of *repentance towards* God, and
 " *faith in* ME in order to salvation. Baptize
 " all who receive this gospel, and appear cor-
 " dially to embrace your testimony; and then
 " instruct them in all the parts of practical
 " religion, whereby they may honour ME and
 " my FATHER in the world, by living in all
 " holiness and righteousness of life." Com-
 pare *Mark* xvi. 16. *Luke* xxiv. 47. *Acts* xxvi.
 18—21. *Heb.* vi. 1, 2 This is so very na-
 tural and fair a sense of the words, and, in
 substance, so generally embraced by *judicious*
 and *learned expositors*, that it is wonderful
 any should give the words another turn, in
 order to vindicate *infant-baptism* from them.
 Nor does it seem less wonderful, that any who
 admit this sense of them, should yet think
 this text to admit of that practice. I would
 venture to attempt a reply to a few arguments
 offered with one or the other of these views.
 One is by a criticism on the *Greek* word
 μαθητευσατε, translated *teach*, v. 19. which
 is to this effect " The word means *to disciple*
 " or *make disciples*, and the words *baptizing*
 " them, are explanatory of it, and shew the
 " way by which we are to make disciples, i. e.
 " by

“ by baptism.” Others chuse to say, “ It signifies to make disciples in general, or by any means, and baptism is one way of making disciples ; therefore we are to make disciples of the *adult* by *teaching*, but of infants by baptizing them.” This, I think, is the best and strongest light, in which this argument can be placed.

Ans. 1. It is evident this is different from, and even contrary to, the known and acknowledged sense of the words, in the best critics and commentators, (as those who are acquainted with critics and commentators, well know) and plainly to serve a turn, which cannot so well be served by allowing the words their natural signification.* And I believe there will never be a passage produced, in which the words can fairly be interpreted to signify making disciples or profelytes, any other way than by *teaching*. 2. They who object this, allow that we should teach the *adult*, before we baptize them : and this is the chief text they produce in proof of it. But it is evident, if this text will admit of the sense the objec-

* That this is the chief end of this criticism, the learned and impartial reader (and it is pity the unlearned should be affected with it) may have a very affecting proof, by consulting and compraring (besides many others) those two truly valuable authors, *Turretine. Instit. Theol. Pars 2. Quest. 14, 9. Pars. 3. Quest. 1, 8. Quest. 204.* and *Gerhard. Harm. Hist. Evang. in loc.* Would any one see this argument particularly discussed, *pro* and *contra*, see *Gale's Reflect.* p. 245—322. *Wall's Defence*, p. 177—211.

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tion gives it, it cannot prove even this. For if, according to this text we can profelyte by *baptism*, or by any means beside *teaching*, we have liberty to baptize the most profligate and ignorant of mankind. But as I believe few will allow of this practice, they cannot plead fairly for this sense of this text. I add 3dly, If it will admit of this sense, given in the objection, how can we vindicate the *apostles* and their practice? We well know they *first taught*, and then *baptized*. Now we believe, they understood, and acted according to this *commission*. Hence their practice will be a good *comment* upon it. If then it does not necessarily enjoin teaching before baptism, this practice was without foundation. On the other hand, if the apostles did, according to this commission, teach any before they baptized them, this commission cannot admit of *baptism* before teaching; consequently, not of the baptism of *infants*.

Fourthly. I can think of no imaginable sense, in which either an *infant* or an *adult person*, can be made a disciple of *Christ*, while untaught, whether *baptized* or no: and should be very glad, if any one would tell me in what sense a baptized infant can be so called, more properly than one unbaptized. Ought they to be taught afterward? So ought the unbaptized, as soon as capable of it. Have they a right to this teaching? No more than the unbaptized. Do they, when they come to years, profess to be disciples of *Christ*? Their profess-

profession is either real and sincere, and such as proves them to be such, or it is not. If it is, they ought *now* to be baptized. If it is not, they have not been made disciples by their *baptism*. Nor can there be any opportunity for a baptized child to be taught, more than one unbaptized. They can sure hear, and read, and be taught their catechisms, or the like, every way as well, unbaptized, as baptized. Nay, I venture to add farther, if there is any difference, the *unbaptized child*, is more likely to be diligent in this: for alas! we find, by unhappy experience, and constant observation, that persons who are told they were baptized in their infancy, do naturally place some hope of their salvation on this; and imagine they are in a better state than others, because of it; though it be every way so contrary to the *word of God*. I think it not possible for *enlightened men*, who have been accustomed to converse with others, living and dying, on this subject, to doubt, that thousands go secure to destruction, from this consideration. I do not say they are taught this; yet how can it be otherwise while one tells them they are regenerated in their baptism; another that they are born in, or under the covenant of grace; and that baptism is a seal of that covenant to them; a third, that baptism brings them into this covenant, and the like: all evidently contrary to scripture, and I ask leave to say, I fear too naturally leading to eternal destruction. I

cannot

cannot but fear it will, one day be found so; for how natural it is to say, if they are born again, they shall certainly be saved: and if they are in the covenant of grace, how is it possible they should perish? To all which we may add, there cannot possibly be any *obligation* upon any *minister* or any *parent*, to instruct a baptized child more than one unbaptized.

Fifthly. There is in us all, by nature, not only an ignorance of, but an aversion to, both the duties and doctrines of *Christianity*, which ignorance and aversion, must be, in some measure, removed before we can be disciples of *Christ*; since we cannot be his disciples, and yet be ignorant of, and averse to him and his ways. That baptism has no such affect upon the mind, as to dispel this ignorance and aversion, daily observation evinces. But it is evident the ministry of the word is designed, and calculated, under the influences of the *blessed Spirit*, to effect this, compare *Rom. x. 13, 14, 15. Acts xxvi. 18, 19, 20. Jam. i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23.* Therefore it cannot be that any should be made disciples by baptism.

Sixthly. We have observed before, that the *apostles* followed another method, in making disciples, than by baptizing them: as did also both *our Lord* and *John the Baptist*. *Jesus* it is said, *made and baptized* (i. e. by his *apostles*; for himself baptized none, *v. 2.*) more disciples than *John* (i. e. than *John* made and baptized) Whence it is evident, that they
made

made them disciples *before* they baptized them: And that this was the constant practice of the *apostles* afterwards the history of their *Acts* shews. See *Acts* ch. ii. viii. x. xvi. xviii. All which proves that disciples were not, at that time, made by baptism: and by a natural and inseparable consequence, that the commission of which we now speak, does not admit of *infant baptism*.

Seventbly. Though I think what has been said, enough to justify the sense of the words first given, and, by consequence, to prove the invalidity of *infant-baptism*; yet I may be allowed to add, that the followers of the *apostles*, the *primitive fathers*, appear to have understood and observed, this text in this sense. The passages before referred to in them, to prove that they baptized by immersion, will, many of them, prove that the subjects of this immersion were *believers*; especially the passages cited from *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Justin Martyr*, and *Tertullian*. And *Justin Martyr's* well known words plainly enough shew, that it was not their custom to baptize any others; which, for the reader's satisfaction, I would here recite. They are in what is called his second * apology for the *Christians* to the emperor *A. Pius*, to whom he is professedly giving a *circumstantial account* of the manners and ceremonies of the *Christians in general*, at that time, about A. D. 150. And therefore it is unreasonable

* It is called his *second*; but *Eusebius*, *Dupin*, and others, suppose it was his *first*.

to suppose he would omit *infant-baptism*, had it been then in use. His words are *, “ Lest we should appear to act deceitfully, or prevaricate, in this relation, we will shew in what manner we, when renewed by *Christ*, devoted ourselves to God. As many as are persuaded that the things spoke and taught by us are true, and promise to live accordingly, are directed to pray unto God, and to implore, with fasting, the pardon of their past sins, while we fast and pray together with them. Then we bring them where there is water, and they are regenerated with the same kind of regeneration with which we ourselves were regenerated; for they are washed in water in the *name of the Father, &c.*” These are his words, and I desire the reader to remember, 1st. That this is an account of the *Christians* in general. 2d. That he professes to give an impartial account; and not to prevaricate, or deal unfairly. Therefore had *infant-baptism* been, at that time, in use among *Christians*, he seems to have been under indispensible obligation to mention it. Yet he mentions none, as being baptized among them, but such as first were persuaded, believed, promised, &c. I cannot think, therefore, but this is a clear and full evidence, so far as a negative can be evident, that *infant-baptism* was not now in use in the church: but that their constant practice was first to teach, and then to baptize; and,

* *Opera ejus*, pag. 93. *Colon Ed.* 1686.

consequently that they understood not the *commission*, to authorise *infant-baptism* *.

Some seem sensible this must be the sense of the words, and therefore intimate, that “ They do not relate to *infants*, but only to the adult.” Answ. This seems an acknowledgment that *infant-baptism* cannot be vindicated from this text; for if it can, it must relate to more than the *adult*. And if it cannot, we should either produce some other *commission*, in which *infant-baptism* is authorized, to which I think we shall none of us pretend, or own and vindicate the baptism of *believers*, the *one baptism* enjoined in this *commission*. For I hope none of us will proceed in any work, or administer any ordinance, without a commission from God, the great law-giver. And I think it seems a foul reflection upon the wisdom and love of *Christ Jesus*, to say it is his will that we should baptize infants, and yet has only given us one commission with regard to this ordinance, which does not extend to them. Sure no good man would leave his servants to labour under such perplexity and darkness in a matter of so great importance.

* The reader is desired to observe, that the question is not whether the *Fathers* mention the practice of baptizing believers, as common at that day. This is owned on all hands. Dr. *Wall* himself says, a hundred passages may be produced in a day’s time, which prove this. *Defence of Hist. of Inf. Bap.* p. 235. The question is whether they baptized any *infants*, so soon as *Justin’s* time. I think the above quotation, shews they did not.

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One would wonder to find it said, "We are to baptize *all nations*; infants are a part of all nations: therefore infants are to be baptized." The words cannot be taken in the most extensive sense; for if so, we must baptize all *Jews, Turks, and Pagans*, which are a part of *all nations*. If we say they must first be converted, we seem to give up the point; for hence it is argued that none are to be baptized before conversion. If we do not thus extend it, we must use some means to fix its limits; and the best I can think of, is to make it equally extensive with the foregoing clause; and so baptize none who are not first taught; which will prove that these words admit not of *infant-baptism*.

Others again, who allow that sense of the text, we now plead for, yet say, "The commission cannot be against *infant-baptism*; because, had the words been spoke to *Jewish prophets*; go teach all nations, *circumcising* them in the name of the God of *Israel*, teaching, &c. they would certainly have circumcised infants." But to this, it is easy to reply, 1. That it is not enough to say the *commission* is not AGAINST *infant-baptism*; if it is not clearly *for* it, unless we can find another *commission*, there can be no authority for it in scripture. 2. If the words of themselves, prove this practice, we need not recur to circumcision, or any other institution; but fairly prove it from them, as they stand. 3. If these words, simply of themselves, being first spoke to the *Jew-*
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ish prophets, would clearly have taught them to circumcise their infants; then, of natural consequence, it will be easy to prove *infant-baptism* from them now. But the objection implies that *infant-baptism*, cannot fairly be proved from them as they stand, without some other circumstances, gathered elsewhere: for if they will, as is just now said, why do we recur to circumcision? The *Jewish prophets* then, must have wanted some other considerations or instructions, to warrant their *circumcision* of infants; and consequently, so do we, to warrant our *baptizing* of them. 4. The *Jews* had a plain and express command for circumcising infants, and if, beside that express command, such a *commission* as that we now speak of, had been given them, it may be granted, they would certainly have circumcised infants. But then, if what is said above is true, they would not have done it by virtue of this general *commission*; but of that express *command*. Now, as *we* have no such express command, their case and ours, is by no means parallel.

Fifth. Perhaps they who object this, do it from the supposition that baptism succeeds circumcision. Now that baptism does not come in the room of circumcision, after all that hath been said about it, is, I think, evident from the following hints. 1. Neither our *Lord* nor *John the Baptist*, nor the *apostles*, ever hinted that it does, that we find, to any
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of those whom they baptized, when they baptized them: which I think very strange, had this been the case. 2. The only passage produced in favour of this sentiment, seems to be express against it. *Col. ii. 11, 12.* Which sure is evident from this one consideration, that the circumcision there mentioned is said to be *made without hands*: baptism is no more administred without hands, than the *Jewish* circumcision was. It is much more agreeable to the expressions here used, as well as to the whole tenor of scripture, to explain it of what the same *apostle* elsewhere calls the *circumcision of the heart. Rom. ii. 29.* i. e. the *renewing of the mind*, which always should be, and undoubtedly, in the *apostles* time, always was, followed with baptism, as they are here placed. 3. In *many things*, it is evident we have no regard to circumcision, in administering the ordinance of baptism, why then should we in baptizing infants? We do not baptize precisely on the 8th day; we baptize *females* as well as *males*, &c. which are contrary to the practice of the *Jews* in *circumcision*. I cannot see how one succeeds the other, unless we are either to observe the former in all things, or shew where the scripture allows us to make a difference. Should it be said, “The Lord did not mention these circumstances, when he enjoined baptism; therefore we do not observe them;” we allow too much by consequence; i. e. that we are only, in administering this ordinance,

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to regard what is exprest in the institution of it; and consequently, as no mention is made of *infants*, we are not to baptize them. We seem therefore necessarily reduced to this *dilemma*. Either we must strictly regard the words of institution; or we must strictly regard the institution of circumcision; or shew that *Christ Jesus* when he instituted baptism, gave us liberty in some cases to deviate from the manner of the *Jews* in circumcision; but enjoined a regard to it in other cases, or own that we act by no institution at all. The reader may chuse his part; I would take the first, and have a strict regard to the words of the institution, exprest in the *commission*, and so baptize none but those who are taught. I hope I shall be excused in this short digression. 4. Their being both in use at the same time, three years, at least, before our Lord's death, and baptism answering its own proper end, before circumcision was abolished, must, I think, after all, remain an unanswerable argument against the one succeeding the other. 5. Besides, it seems the *apostles* had a very good opportunity of mentioning this matter, when the dissention happened at *Antioch*, between the *Jewish* and *Gentile* converts, concerning the necessity of circumcision, mentioned *Acts* xv. I think it very improbable, that this dissention would ever have taken place, had baptism been substituted in the room of circumcision. For had this been the case, surely the *Jewish converts* must have been informed

informed of it, at their embracing of *Christianity*. And if so, one cannot think they would make any attempts to revive a ceremony, which they had necessarily acknowledged the abolition of, at their embracing of that new Testament ordinance. On the other hand, one can think of no argument so effectual to convince the *Jews* and establish and satisfy the minds of the *Gentiles*, as to remind them that the ordinance of baptism, which they had all embraced, superseded the necessity of circumcision. But nothing any way relative to this, is heard from them; which appears to me a very weighty consideration in opposition to the argument for *infant baptism*, taken from its succession to circumcision. 6. Nor are we helped at all, that I can see, by saying, that “The children of believers are in the *covenant of grace* with their parents; and that baptism is to them a seal of this *covenant now*, as circumcision was, under the mosaic dispensation.” Because,

First, The covenant to which circumcision belonged, does not by any means appear to be properly the *covenant of grace*. It had many temporal blessings, on *God's* part, to be bestowed on *Abraham*, with whom it was made, which cannot in any wise belong to the *covenant of grace*. As a numerous posterity, kings to come from his loins, a settled habitation for his posterity in the land of *Canaan*, &c. *Gen. xvii.* These are all quite different blessings from those contained in the *covenant of grace*,

grace, mentioned *Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12*. It may be allowed, I think, that spiritual blessings also, were contained in the *Abrahamic covenant*; but then the *apostle* teaches us, these blessings were not derived to his *natural*, but *spiritual* seed, i. e. *all who believe*, are of faith, &c. whether Jews or Gentiles. See *Rom. iv. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16. ix. 6, 7, 8, 27. Gal. iii. 7, 9, 29.*

Secondly, Neither circumcision nor baptism are ever called *seals* of any covenant, in all the bible, and much less seals of the *covenant of grace*. Nor can I see with what propriety that name can be given to either of them. Nor indeed, can I yet be well satisfied what divines have meant, or do mean, in calling them so. If it be meant that they shut up the subjects of them from all others, as the property of God alone, in this spiritual sense; or that they set some mark on the subjects of them, which shews they are, in this sense, none but *God's*; or that they demonstrate and ascertain to the person himself, his own interest, in this covenant; surely nothing can be more contrary to scripture, than to call it a *seal of the covenant of grace*, in any of these senses.* Could any of these be said of *Ismael* and *Esau*, and multitudes of others, who were circumcised. Or of *Simon Magus*, and many other apostates and deceivers, who

* See more uses of a *seal*, in Dr. Sibbs's *Fountain Sealed*, p. 131—141. But those mentioned above are most applicable to this subject.

have been baptized? If not, how can either circumcision or baptism be called seals of the covenant of grace?

Thirdly, It is not being in any *covenant*, any more than being born of any *parents* whatever, that can give any person a title to any ordinance, or authorize any to administer it to them. Nothing can do this properly speaking, but the *command of God*. Now if the blessed God, gives a command to administer any ordinance, the chief things to be regarded are, the manner of administering that ordinance, and the characters of those to whom it must be administered. These characters *alone* can constitute any person a proper subject of the ordinance. These characters, in the case of *circumcision*, are thus expressed. *He that is eight days old, born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger*. Gen. xvii. 12, 13. But in the *new Testament*, we have nothing of this kind in the case of *baptism*. There I can find no authority to baptize any but those who are *taught, repent, believe, &c.* Now as we shall not pretend intirely to regard the institution of circumcision, in administering baptism; and so baptize only males,—precisely on the eighth day,—and our servants, whether converted or no; and as none pretend that our Lord gave licence to omit these, and yet follow circumcision in administering baptism, it must be proper to regard the plain words of institution *only*, and so first teach, and then baptize those who are taught.

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Fourthly,

Fourthly, I might add, the objection, supposes that circumcision was limited to the children of *believers*, i. e. pious *Jews*, or else I do not see the force of it. Now this is quite contrary to plain matter of fact, as I think every attentive reader of the *old Testament* must see. The children of *wicked Jews*, had the same right to circumcision as those of *pious Jews*. If then the children of believers *only*, must be baptized, this is another instance in which these two institutions differ; and consequently another argument that the one cannot succeed the other.

Fifthly, I desire I may not offend any serious Christian, or pious brother in the ministry, if I crave leave to say farther, I think two circumstances shew, that what is contained in the objection, is not of much weight, even with those who make use of it. 1. That many, if not all of them, baptize, as they call it, the children of those, in whom there is no appearance of faith. 2. When those who were born of wicked parents, and were, what they call, baptized in their infancy, come to join with them in *church-fellowship*, they do not re-baptize them. Now, allowing that sprinkling is baptism; I would say this baptism of unbeliever's children, is either valid and authorized by scripture, or it is not. If it is not, how can these our brethren administer it, or receive those into *church-fellowship* who have had no other baptism? If it is, then why do they talk of *believers* children
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having a right to this ordinance, since, by this concession, they allow, that the children of *unbelievers* have the same right? From all these things it appears evident to me, that neither circumcision nor any thing else, can warrant our baptizing any but believers.

Some others have thought, there is another way, better than this, to account for the silence of scripture, about *infant-baptism*, and yet maintain the validity of the practice. "Because, say they, the *Jews* were wont to baptize *profelytes*, and their children; which practice the *disciples* were acquainted with, and therefore would naturally infer that the children of converted parents ought to be baptized *now*, under the *gospel-dispensation*, without our Lord's making express mention of it." As this is, by some, esteemed the best argument for *infant-baptism*,* I ask leave to collect a few circumstances relating to this practice of baptizing *profelytes*, among the *Jews*, and the evidence we have of it, with a few remarks.

1st. Allowing that there really was such a practice among the *Jews*, and this of divine appointment, it is very natural to suppose that if our blessed Lord designed we should follow them at all, he would either have us follow them in every thing relating to this practice, or he would tell us wherein we

* Dr. Hammond says the foundation of *infant-baptism* is far better laid in this practice than in circumcision. See *Rees ut supra*, p. 29. *Gale* p. 335, 353.

ought to deviate from them. I can see no method of reasoning from their practice to our's, (either in this case or in circumcision) which will not take in all the circumstances relating to their practice, except Christ had forbidden it, and mentioned some that are to be excluded. I can find no circumstance mentioned as excluded in the *commission*. It therefore seems quite necessary, either to follow them in every thing, or in nothing. I would mention several things which I suppose few, who use this argument, imitate them in; and the curious reader, may examine the writings of those who have treated more largely of this practice for more.* 1. They say that after the *Jews* were once baptized, at their appearing before the Lord, *Ex. xix. 10.* none of their offspring were ever to be baptized afterwards. And the same of *heathen proselytes*; the children they had, when baptized, say they, might be baptized at their parents request; but not any who were born afterwards: for all born after the baptism of their parents, were esteemed born clean. 2. All males under thirteen years, and one day old; and all females under twelve years and one day old, were baptized at the request of their *parents*, those above that age, at their own request. 3. If a woman

* *Lightf. Horæ Hebraicæ in Matt. iii. 6. Wall's Introduction to Hist. of Inf. Bapt. and smaller extracts in Ainsworth on Gen. xvii. Lightf. Harm. of N. Test. § 9. Cradock's Harm. of 4 Evang. ch. i. § 21. ch. vi. § 21, &c.*

was baptized when with child, her child was not baptized again: this baptism of the mother served for both. 4. I remember no hint of any of them who were baptized any other way than by *immersion*. Now if their baptism is followed by us in any thing, why not in all these things? I may add, this baptism was after circumcision, and therefore if *Christian baptism* succeeds the *Jewish*, it cannot surely succeed circumcision too.

2dly, If they had such a practice, it was not enjoined them by the Lord; but was a tradition of their own; as I think all Christian writers will allow. Now we know how much our Lord spoke against their traditions, especially those of baptisms. See *Mark vii.* and we cannot think he would approve of this, while he disapproved of others, and not inform us of it. Now we have no information of this; and therefore, allowing they had such a tradition, it is unreasonable to suppose our Lord should design to have it imitated in a *gospel-institution*. But

3dly, There is great reason to believe they had no such custom of baptizing proselytes under the old Testament dispensation as is pleaded for. Because, as several* have observed, " It is not mentioned in *scripture*, nor in the *apochrypha*, nor in *Josephus*, who wrote particularly of the antiquities, customs

* Dr. Gale's *Reflec.* p. 270, 271. Dr. Gill's *Inf. Bapt.* a part and pillar of popery, p. 38, 39. *Rees* against *Walker*, p. 21.

and ceremonies of the *Jews*; nor in *Philo-Judæus*, who wrote a little before him, both which authors might have been expected to mention this practice, had there been any such in use, at, or before that time." The evidence produced in favour of it, is from the *Gemara* of the *Jews*,* a work wrote at

* For the sake of the less-knowing-reader, note here, that the *Gemara* is the comment, as the *Misna* is the text, of the *Jewish* work called the *Talmud*; which gives an account of the religious ceremonies of the *Jews*. There are two of these; one called the *Jerusalem Talmud*, as written by the *Jews of Judea*; the other the *Babylonish Talmud*, as written by the *Jews in Babylonia*. The former, according to Dr. *Bray*, *Buxtorf*, and some others, followed by Dr. *Gale* and Mr. *Rees*, was written about A. D. 230. But Dr. *Prideaux* supposes it not compleated until about A. D. 300. The latter about A. D. 500, (and it seems *F. Morinus* maintains it to be still later, about the 7th century.) Both these *Gemaras* are said to speak of *Jewish* baptism of *profelytes*; and Dr. *Wall* would have it, by a passage from *Selden*, that the *Misna* mentions it too: but Dr. *Gill* shews that the passage has not a tittle concerning it; and says he is content to risque his reputation for *Jewish* learning, (which we know, is not small) if a passage be produced either from the *Babylonish* or *Jerusalem Misna*, that mentions it. See *Prid. Conn.* b. v. p. 463—473, 10th Edit. *Gale's* *Re-ſec.* p. 326. *Rees*, p. 17—29. *Wall's* *Hist.* *Introduc.* p. 79. *Gill's* *Inf. Bapt.* a part and pillar of popery, p. 39. And that very valuable *Scripture Dictionary* published 1759, in 3 vols. octavo; worthy to be recommended to every young student in divinity, and to all who would acquire a knowledge of the chronology, geography, and history of the bible. *N. B.* It is a judicious extract from *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, *Calmet*, *Usher*, *Prideaux*, *Shuckford*, *Baronius*, *Sir Isaac Newton*, *Maundrell*, *Whitby*, *Wells*, *Arbuthnot*, &c. &c. See it on the words *Gemara*, *Misna*, *Talmud*.

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soonest, not until about A. D. 230, but according to others, not until A. D. 300. At which time they might easily take for granted what was not true, as to ceremonies that had or had not been in use so long before this time as 1600 or 1700 years; the time when this ceremony is said to take its rise. Especially as this work was not compiled from any writings, but from *oral tradition*, handed down from one to another; which, considering the length of time, the whimsical spirit of the *Jews* in general, the *talmudical* writers in particular, and the little account made of their writings; makes it very evident, that we have no solid authority to believe they had any such practice, at the time pretended to. These things being put together, it is wonderful that this, at best, supposed tradition, should be called a *basis for infant-baptism*; and I must say, I scarcely know what could be said more effectually to prove that it has no basis at all, except in the inventions of men. From these things, I think it is evident, that we must either allow *infant-baptism* is authorized by the commission, or despair of finding it any where else. To this therefore we return again. And if any thing is needful, besides what has been said, in order to fix its sense, I think it may be done by considering the words themselves—the parallel passage—the conduct of those who obeyed it, and some things said concerning the ordinance.

1. The words themselves. We have shewn already, the words *all nations* cannot, and are not pretended, to include *every individual* of mankind; and the objections answered above, imply, that they do not of themselves, naturally teach us to baptize infants. In order then, to have further satisfaction, if it may be, may we not, from what has been said on this text, reason thus? All expositors, and all others, for what I know, do allow and maintain, that the *adult* must be taught, before they are baptized: now the text makes no distinctions, nor speaks of two different kinds of subjects, nor of methods in the ministerial work of teaching and baptizing. If then we baptize before teaching, according to this *universally allowed* sense of the text, it is plain, we act without warrant. But when we teach before we baptize, we act precisely according to what all men allow to be the natural sense of our Lord's words. Again, all men allow that the *apostles* were, and other ministers are, commanded, in this text, to do what they are able, in making disciples to Christ in all nations. Now we must either make them disciples *after*, or *by*, or *before* baptism. Not *after*; for that would be, not only to invert the order of the words, but to oppose the universal sense of mankind concerning them. And I think it is proved above, that none are, or can be made disciples of Christ *by* baptism. It must then be *before* baptism: and *teach* must fix the limits of *baptize*, and

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we must baptize none but those who are first taught, unless we deviate from this our ONLY commission.

2. This is confirmed by the parallel passage, *Mark xvi. 15, 16.* where what *Matthew* calls *teaching*, is called *preaching the gospel*,—and this before, and in order to *faith*; and *faith* before *baptism*. I think any one must see and acknowledge that the people now called *Baptists*, do proceed exactly according to the order pointed out in these two passages.

3. The method of those who taught and baptized, both before and after the commission was given, proves the same. We cannot find that *John* ever baptized any, not even though they had *Abraham to their father*, who did not repent, confess their sins, &c. Both he and the apostles, as we have seen before, first made them disciples, and then baptized them, compare *Matt. iii. Mark. i. Luke iii. John iv. 12.* Those baptized *Acts ii. 41.* were such as gladly received the word; not them and their children too. Those baptized *Acts viii. 12.* were only such as *believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus.* We are particularly informed they were *men and women*; but not a word of their children with them. Nothing could have been more easy, more natural, or more agreeable to the manner of the sacred *historians*, than to have added—and *children*—had there been any then baptized. Those baptized

Acts x. 48. were such as *spake with tongues and glorified God*, v. 46. The households mentioned as baptized, were of the same kind. It is evident enough that *Lydia's* household are called brethren, and are such as the *apostles* could comfort by their ministrations, *Acts* xvi. 15, 40. The *jailor's* household were such as had first the word of the Lord spoke to them, and rejoiced, believing in God, *Acts* xvi. 32, 33, 34. The household of *Crispus* were such as believed in the Lord, *Acts* xviii. 8. And the household of *Stephanas* were the first-fruits of *Achaia*, i. e. the first persons converted there, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, 1 *Cor.* i. 16. xvi. 15. Whatever he meant by that word, it cannot be applied to infants. All these households, therefore, are not, as some seem to have supposed, instances of the baptism of infants; but proofs of the baptism of believers.

4. Some things said concerning this ordinance, prove it cannot belong to infants. They were to baptize in, or into, * *the name* i. e. into a profession of the doctrine, or belief of the *Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. Now

* Εἰς τὸ ὄνομα. This phrase has been supposed to signify by the authority of the *Father*, &c. And it is true we baptize by *divine authority*: and this is pretty agreeable to our English phrase—in the name of:—but I humbly conceive it is by no means agreeable to the original words. Compare 1 *Sam.* xxv. 9. *Ezra* v. 1. *Septuag.* *John* v. 25. *Mark* xvi. 17. *Greek*. That the phrase here, has the sense given it above, may appear by the like Greek phrase, *Rom.* vi. 3. 1 *Cor.* i. 13, 15. x. 2. *Gal.* iii. 27.

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I cannot imagine how a baptized infant makes profession of doctrine, faith, or any thing of the like kind, more than one unbaptized. But when a person is converted, and then baptized, as a proof that he determines henceforth to own God as his only *Lord* and *law-giver*; and to maintain, in faith and practice, a continual regard to the *sacred three*, it is easy to see how agreeable it is to these words, and how strongly such an expression militates against the baptism of infants; since it is not possible that infants should, in this sense, be baptized in the *name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; and consequently, if this is the sense, as I believe will generally be allowed, it is not possible that this commission should authorize, nor even tolerate *infant-baptism*. To the same purpose we are told, by the *apostle*, that as many as (i. e. every one who) were baptized at *Rome* and *Galatia*, were *baptized into his death*, and had *put on Christ*, *Rom. vi. 3. Gal. iii. 27.* Now as the apostle here, not only speaks of baptism in general, but expressly of ALL who had been baptized among them; and as these words cannot be applied to infants, it appears a substantial proof that there was no such practice as *infant-baptism* in these churches; and consequently there ought to be no such practice in any churches of *Christ* at this day. This argument is the more considerable, as these churches had now been a good while planted; that

that at *Rome*,* especially, about fifteen years : in which time there must have been children born and baptized, had they used any such practice. Again, the apostle *Peter* calls *baptism*, the *answer of a good conscience towards God*.† Whatever might be said in a critical manner, on this text, I believe none will ever be able to vindicate such an exposition of it, as does not imply that the ordinance is to be attended to from a consciousness of its being a duty, in the person to whom it is to be administered. Now infants can have no such consciousness; and therefore cannot be the proper subjects of that baptism which is the *answer of a good conscience towards God*.

There are two or three other scriptures about which some weaker readers seem perplexed, by hearing what some others have said upon them. It is said, *they brought young children to Christ that he should touch them*, &c. *Matt.* xix. 13, 14. *Mark* x. 12—17. *Luke* xviii. 15, 18. But it should be observed, 1. That, there is not a word about baptism in these places. 2. We are assured, our Lord baptized none: therefore they could not be brought to him to be baptized by him, see *John* iv. 2. 3. The *evangelists* tell us plainly what they were brought for, and what our Lord did for them. They were brought, say

* The church of *Rome* is supposed to have been planted about A. D. 43. and the epistle written about A. D. 57 or 58.

† 1 *Pet.* iii. 21.

they, *that he should touch them,—put his hands on them and pray.* And they inform us, he did so. 4. As to those words, *of such is the kingdom of Heaven;*—though I doubt not, all infants, dying in infancy, will be saved; yet the plain meaning of the words, seems to be, that those who are humbled and sensible of their own weakness and helplessness, and so become dependant and teachable as little children, shall have a place in the church below; and the kingdom of glory above, compare *Matt. xviii. 2—7.* And it seems our Lord chose to manifest his love and regard to such sensible, humble, teachable souls, by receiving these little ones, who are, in this sense, so like his saints. I would take this opportunity to observe, that I cannot see the least shadow of reason for that common objection, “That we are churlish towards infants, and make their privileges fewer under the gospel, than they were under the law.” Whatever they were under the law, it is certain there cannot possibly be one gospel-privilege mentioned, to which a baptized infant is entitled, more than one unbaptized. And indeed suppose there could, unless *infant-baptism* be enjoined in scripture, the reflection would not affect us, but the *blessed Redeemer*, who has given us no warrant to baptize them.

The other, and I think the *only* other text, necessary to be mentioned here, is *1 Cor. vii. 14.* *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified, &c. else were your children unclean, but now are they*

they holy. The chief thing needful in opening this text, is, to understand the word *holy*. And I think we may very well fix the sense of this word, and may see that the text has not the most distant regard or relation to *infant-baptism*, by observing,

1. What was here the design of the *apostle*. It was simply to shew, that when one party of a married couple was converted, and the other remained in unbelief, it was still the duty of the believer to abide with the unbeliever, *ver.* 12, 13. That the husband should not *put away his wife*; nor the wife *put away * her husband*. Now it was necessary he should speak of such a *sanctification*, as would be pertinent to his design, and to the subject he is upon; and therefore of such a sanctification as would manifest that the husband and wife ought to abide together. To speak of any other sanctification, would have been to wander quite away from his subject.

2dly. It would neither be pertinent to the *apostle's* design, to speak of real, inward *sanctification*, or any sort of outward, reputed *sanctification*, nor is it agreeable to the letter and expression of the text, to understand him in

* The Greek word *αφερω* is the same in both verses; and Dr. Doddridge (after Dr. Lardner) observes from *Josephus*, that though it was not allowed in the *Jewish* law, that *women* might divorce their husbands, yet it was practised; they probably having learnt it of the *Roman women*, who are known in this age to have practised it in the most scandalous manner. *Fam. Expos. on Mark x. 12.* vid. & *Just. Mart. Apol.* page 42.

this sense. Not pertinent to his *design*—since it is his design, not to shew whether they are to abide together, after the unbeliever is *really sanctified* (after which he cannot be an unbeliever) but while he or she, remains a heathen, and in unbelief. And it is not either real, or reputed *sanctification* in any religious sense that would any way oblige them to abide together; except they had voluntarily espoused each other, and upon such espousal, been legally united in the relation of man and wife by the marriage contract. On the other hand, if they are so united, “In virtue of THIS UNION, as a valuable author ‘observes*, “they (i. e. the man and wife) become each other’s property.” Consequently, without such a sanctification as that now mentioned whether *reputed* or *real*, they are under the strongest obligations to abide with each other, that can be. It is not possible that such a sanctification can any way strengthen the obligation at all: it could not therefore be to the *apostle’s* purpose to mention it.—Nor is it agreeable to the letter and expression of the text. Because he says, this sanctification is *by the believer*; whereas, if, it is *real* sanctification, it is by the *Spirit of God*; since it is his prerogative *alone*, to sanctify the heart. If it is a *reputed* sanctification, (I own, I do not well understand the phrase as used in this case, and

* The Rev. Mr. Venn’s complete Duty of Man, p. 342.
An excellent family-book.

much less, do I see its propriety) as some seem to think, * it should rather have been said—sanctified by the husband's or wife's *faith*, than by the husband or wife. Besides, the sanctification here spoke of, is consistent with the person's being an unbeliever, which character he still bears, though, in the *apostle's* sense sanctified. He cannot therefore speak of *real, inward* sanctification. And as to *reputed* sanctification, I can find no foundation, either for the expression, or idea (if I form any proper notion of the idea fixed to it) in any part of the new Testament. Let me just add, the *apostle* does not say, the MARRIAGE RELATION is sanctified, but the UNBELIEVING PERSON is sanctified, by the husband or wife. We observe upon the whole then, “ It is sanctification, not of the
 “ *conjugal relation*, but the *unbelieving person*,
 “ —yet the person sanctified remains an un-
 “ believer,—not effected by the *Spirit of God*,
 “ nor by the *believer's faith*,—nor by the be-
 “ liever's *faith* in conjunction with the *blessing*
 “ *of God* : but *simply* by the *believer*. It is a
 “ sanctification that obliges the believer and
 “ unbeliever to live together, as man and
 “ wife.” Hence I observe,

3dly. That as, for the reasons above offered, no sanctification yet mentioned, can be intended by the *apostle*, so I can think of none, so agreeable to the design, letter, and con-

* Vid. *Beza, Diodate, Henry, Jun., and Tremel.* in loc.
 nection

nection of the words, as SET APART *to be entirely the believer's property, by the one espousing and contracting with the other*, at the time, when they chose each other, for husband and wife. As if *Paul* had said, " Let not the believer dismiss or divorce the unbeliever; for, remember you have formerly chose and *set apart* each other, from all other persons in the world, to be each other's sole property, as man and wife; and therefore as your relation to each other, depends, not on your being converted or unconverted, since this was not mentioned in the engagement; but your relation and the obligations consequent upon it, depend wholly on this contract, it cannot be dissolved now, by one being converted, which was never taken into the question at first; but you remain in the same relation and under the same obligation, that you ever did: therefore, let not the husband put away his wife," &c.

If any thing, besides what is said above, is requisite, to justify this sense of the words, let it be observed, 1. That this sense seems so fair, natural and easy, that some eminent divines *, who have yet been advocates for *infant baptism*, seem to take the words in this sense, or in one very near to it. Though I must confess, they have not spoke so clearly on it, as that I can fully satisfy myself, what

* *Calvin, Melancton, Dr. Doddridge* in loc. *Dr. W. Gouge on Domestic Duties*, p. 112. 2d edition.

idea they fix to the word *sanctify*. 2. Some have observed that the *Jewish Rabbins* in their writings, use the word *sanctify*, (i. e. the synonymous *Hebrew* word, *שׁדק*,) to denote the act of *marriage*, or of *consecration in marriage**. I think, I cannot yet fully consent, that the *apostle*, here, by *sanctify*, means precisely the same as *espouse*; but rather that this *sanctification* is the effect of the one person espousing the other; or that they did in the act, and at the time, of espousing or marrying each other, set apart each other, by that act, from all other persons in the world, to be, as man and wife, the sole property of each other, so long as both continue in life. But it would be very natural for the *Rabbins* † to speak in the

* Dr. Gale's Ref. p. 518. Dr. Gill's Expos. in loc.

† I am ready to imagine, it was in some such way, that the ancient *Christians* were led to call baptism *regeneration*. Persons were then usually baptized when they were converted and embraced the gospel; hence after some time, it would be very natural to call baptized persons *regenerated* or *enlightened*, as some have shewn they did; because, if they refused to be baptized, it would be an evidence to them, of those persons who did so, being unregenerate. If they embraced this despised ordinance, especially in those times of darkness and persecution, it would be a proof, at least, somewhat considerable, that the persons who did so, were converted. And hence from this use of the words *baptism* and *regeneration*, as a multitude of other errors and corruptions prevailed, I think they would be led to suppose that a person was regenerated in, or by, the ordinance of baptism. Hence after a time, they would be naturally led to call baptism *regeneration*; and so, as persons were satisfied

the manner above-mentioned, and call marriage, sanctification, as being that act in which every person is sanctified or set apart, in the sense above given, by and for, the person who espouses him or her. And it would still be more natural, to call a husband or wife, sanctified or set apart, to, or by, the other party; because no one could come into that relation, but at the same time, be, in this sense, sanctified. Now though sanctify do not mean precisely the same as espouse, yet the use of the word among the *Rabbins*, in the sense above-mentioned, is, I think, a confirmation

fied none could be saved without regeneration, they would conclude none could be saved without baptism, and from hence, would plead for, and endeavour to introduce the baptism of infants. As this is a conjecture that does not much affect the argument, I shall not be much concerned, if it be disapproved, and even refuted. But I must own, the more I think on this subject, and the more I am led to imagine, that things were brought to what they are brought to, in some such way as this. As to the use of the word *sanctify* among the *Rabbins*, above mentioned, I think, *Buxtorf's* words cited by Dr. Gale, do not prove that they used it in any sense different from that I have ventured to give it. His words are, *apud Rabbinos præterea קרשׁ synechdochicè dicitur de consecratione sponsæ ad conjugium*, “concerning the consecration of the bride, at, or in marriage.” Now there must be as evident ground of distinction between what is done in, or by marriage, and the act of marriage itself, as between the effect and the cause. So that if they really do mean the act of marriage by this word קרשׁ, I should rather think they do it by a common trope, a metonymy of the effect, than that this is the proper sense of the *apostle* here. Especially as the sense I plead for, is so natural and common.

of the sense we give to *sanctify* in the text. However,

3dly. It is very evident that the word has this sense very commonly, in other parts of scripture, I mean to SET APART to a particular use, whether civil or sacred, and whether by God or man. We have the *English* word so used, in many places; the *Greek*, by the *septuagint* still oftner; but the *Hebrew* much more than either. I venture to give a few instances. It is clearly in this sense that the Lord calls the *Medes* (מקדשי) his *sanctified ones*, i. e. those he has chosen and set apart to be his instruments in destroying *Babylon*, *Isa.* xiii. 3. And that the enemies of *Judah* are encouraged to *prepare war* (Heb. קדשו מלחמה sanctify war) *against her*, *Jer.* vi. 4. i. e. to separate themselves from other engagements, and prepare to march against, to assault, take, and subdue her. And that the *prophet*, when pleading with the Lord, *Jer.* xii. 3. says concerning the wicked, *prepare them* (Heb. הקדשם, *sept.* αγιασον αυτους,) *sanctify them for the day of slaughter*, i. e. do thou, or rather, thou certainly wilt, set apart and appoint them to destruction, misery, and woe. Also that the Lord, speaking of *Babylon*, says, *prepare* (Heb. קדשו, *sept.* αγιασατε, *sanctify*) *the nations against her*, which is explained in the next clause by calling together against her the kingdoms of *Ararat*, *Minni*, and *Ashchenaz*, &c. *Jer.* li. 27. And the prophet *Joel* says, *sanctify a fast*, (Heb. קדשו צום *sept.* αγιασατε νηστειαν,) *Joel* i. 14.

i. 14. i. e. separate and set apart a time for that solemn work. Also the prophet *Zephaniah* says, concerning *Judah*, whom the Lord determined to chastise, *The Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid* (Heb. וקרא, sept. ηγγιακε, *he hath sanctified*) *his guests*, i. e. hath set apart and appointed the *Egyptians* and *Chaldeans* to assault, take and slay the men of *Judah*, and to rejoice over them, as persons rejoice when invited to, and entertained at a feast; see also *Jer.* i. 5. *Exod.* xiii. 2. *Neb.* iii. 1. *Mic.* iii. 5. *Joel* ii. 15, 16, &c. In all which places, it is evident, the word *sanctify* means to set apart or appoint to some particular use or work.

What then is meant by the word *holy*? Now are they (i. e. your children) holy. In order to understand this word, let us observe, 1. This holiness in the children is not the effect of the parents faith, but of the unbeliever's sanctification; as it is indisputable, if we do but read the words. And it is quite marvellous that any one should talk of children being holy through or by their parents faith from these words. There is not, that I can see, an appearance of it in the text. Nor would it be at all to the apostle's purpose to say what effects the faith of the parent had upon the children; since this could no way, that I can perceive, strengthen, nor demonstrate, the obligation of the parents to abide together, the point he has in view. If we can form any idea of the sense of a passage from
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the words of it, we must believe that this holiness of the children arises from the sanctification of the unbeliever by the believer. *Else*, says he, i. e. if the unbeliever was not sanctified by the believer, *your children were unclean; but now*, since the unbeliever is sanctified by the believer, *they are holy*.

2. This holiness therefore, must be of the same nature in the children, with the sanctification of the unbelieving parent, which is the cause of it. We know that “in subjects of the same kind and nature, *like causes will have like effects*,” is a first principle, and a fundamental maxim in all inquiries both in the world of nature and grace. This universally allowed maxim, seems necessarily to prove that we cannot suppose the holiness of the children, to be at all different in kind, from the sanctification of the unbelieving parent; and consequently, that if this holiness gives a title to gospel ordinances, the unbelieving parent must have the first title to them. Besides, if this holiness gives children a right to *baptism*, it must needs give them a right to the *Lord's Supper*; for it must, I think be without controversy admitted, that whatever gives a right to the one, must entitle to the other.

3. It is very evident I think, from the very genius of the *gospel* dispensation, and from the tenor of the *new Testament*, that no sort of fæderal or reputed holiness, can give any title to gospel ordinances of any kind, and that no
such

such holiness could possibly arise from the sanctification of the unbeliever we have mentioned above, nor even from the faith of the believer. These things, if I mistake not, have generally been supposed and taken for granted, rather than proved: whereas they are the points chiefly necessary to be determined by fair reasoning, and evident scripture proof, or else we can by no means argue from them in favour of infant baptism.

4. It is clear from the maxim mentioned above, from the nature of things, as well as from scripture, that no holiness can arise from the matrimonial sanctification of the unbelieving parent, but a *legitimate* holiness. q. d. "It must be allowed that you ought to abide together, though one remain in unbelief, since you are under the same obligations to each other still: for if you had not legally espoused and married, and thereby sanctified or set apart each other, it would naturally follow that your children are *unclean*, or children born in uncleanness; but now it is on all hands allowed, that by virtue of the marriage contract, your children are lawful, legitimate children; whence it must follow, that your engagements remain inviolate, for those thus joined together, cannot be put asunder, *Matt. xix. 6.* and that you cannot be separated from each other, on any *religious* account."

5. Though it be granted that this sense of the word is somewhat uncommon, yet, as was long since observed, by an eminent writer

writer among the reformers, *the connexion requires it**; and this is not the only place in which we are obliged to take words in an uncommon sense, by the scope and connexion of the passage in which they are found †, and I venture to propose it to the accurate reader whether the use of *ἡγιασται*, in the former part of the verse, to denote matrimonial sanctification, is not altogether sufficient to justify the sense of (*ἁγία*) holy, which we now plead for? And the apostle evidently uses the kindred word (*ἁγιασμος*) *sanctification* in a like sense, 1 *Thes.* iv. 3, 4. which much confirms the interpretation we give of 1 *Cor.* vii. 14. Besides, as the pious Mr. *Rees** justly observes, “The usual distinction in all civilized nations, between children born in marriage, and out of marriage, has always been that of *clean* and *unclean*: therefore it is no wonder the *apostle* in this place speaking of marriage, (not of baptism) should conform himself to the common mode of speech, in calling children *clean* or *unclean*, *holy* or *unholy*, according as their parents either kept toge-

* “Connexio autem argumenti hæc est. Si non placeret consuetudo conjugalıs, filii vestri essent spurii, & eatenas immundi, *ακαθαστοι*. At filii vestri non sunt spurii, ergo consuetudo conjugalıs Deo placet.” *Melancthon* in loc.

† We have several instances of this; as *יברכך*, *Job* i. 11. and ii. 5. *הקדשות*, *Hos.* iv. 14. *ἐξουστειν*, 1 *Cor.* xi. 10, &c.

* Animadversions on Dr. *Ridgeley's* Discourse of Inf. Bapt. p. 243.

cannot

ther in the honourable state of matrimony, or parted at pleasure, as unclean people use to do, after they have lived together in a vile manner for some time. And indeed, says he, *holy matrimony* is a known phrase in the *English* tongue." These considerations, I think, make it very evident, that the sense we give to this passage is no way absurd, but quite easy, natural and scriptural; yea, I cannot but apprehend, the only natural and scriptural one that can be given to it. I ask the reader's pardon, if I have been too prolix, on a text so often brought into this controversy. Though I apprehend it has no relation to it, yet I supposed this enlargement necessary, in order, if possible, to do something towards settling its sense.

REMARKS on some Passages in the FATHERS.

THE most material and important of these passages necessary to be here mentioned, are those which follow *. Let it first be observed, that we need not recite any passages in favour of believer's baptism, that is, to prove that baptism was administered to believers in the primitive ages of *Christianity*. This is on all

* Some other passages have been cited; but I think, few at this day, will think them of much weight in favour of *infant baptism*; but if any do, they may read Dr. Gale's *Reflections*. Letters 11th, 12th, 13th, Dr. Gill's *Infant Baptism*, an *Innovation*, and others.

hands allowed. Observe also, that all allow *infant baptism* to obtain, at least, in *Africa*, in the time of *Cyprian*, who was ordained Bishop of *Carthage*, about A. D. 248. but it is disputed whether it obtained before. *Origen* flourished about A. D. 230, and is owned by our brethren, the *pædobaptists*, to be the first person we know of, who spoke *expressly* in favour of it. But, for reasons to be afterwards mentioned, it is doubted whether he did speak in favour of it or no: or rather, it is believed he did not. Yet some think it may be inferred from the expressions of some who wrote before him: chiefly from *Justin Martyr* and *Irenæus*. One passage in each. In the former of these, we have mentioned a passage already, that I think, proves the contrary, (see page 32,) from the same apology, p. 62; the following passage has been cited to prove that infants were baptized in his day, viz. “Several persons, says he, among us of both sexes, of sixty or seventy years of age, (οἱ ἐκ παιδῶν ἐμαθῆλευθκαν τῷ Χριστῷ) who were discipled to Christ, or instructed in Christ, in or from their childhood, do still continue uncorrupted.” The argument on this passage is to this effect; “They were discipled to Christ in their childhood, which must include baptism; consequently they were baptized in childhood.” *Ans.* 1. Those who argue thus, allow that the word *μαθῆναι*, on which the argument is founded, most naturally and most generally signifies to make

make disciples by *teaching*; consequently it is more probable it does so here, than the contrary. 2. We have said before, and endeavoured to prove, that the word *strictly* means to make disciples by *teaching*; and believe it is never used to denote making disciples exclusive of teaching. Now until a passage can be produced, which proves the contrary, which, we may be sure, would have been e'er now if it could have been, it is quite reasonable that we still insist on it. 3. *Timothy* knew the scripture from his childhood, and many since him have been instructed and converted in their childhood; and the words of *Justin* evidently mean no more. 4. Though baptism is not mentioned in the passage, nor does *Justin* seem at all to have it in view, yet we may allow that those who are thus *instructed in Christ*, ought to be baptized, whether old or young; since it is not a person's age, but his state, as being converted or unconverted, that constitutes him a subject of that ordinance. This passage therefore, can possibly be no proof that *infant-baptism* was in use, in the days of *Justin Martyr*.

IRENÆUS wrote about A. D. 180, his words pleaded on this occasion, are, "He (Christ) came to save all. (*qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, infantes, & parvulos, &c.*) who by him are born again unto God, infants, and little ones, and children, and young men and old men." The argument on this passage, in favour of *infant-baptism*, is to this effect;

“ To be born again in *Irenæus*, means to be baptized; infants, as well as young men, &c. were thus born again; therefore infants were baptized.” Answer 1. It is well known that some learned men, and even some *pædobaptists*, for reasons not relating to *baptism*, have shewn that there is reason to believe the chapter in which these words are found is spurious, and not the work of *Irenæus* at all.* 2. It is likewise well known that, suppose the chapter to be his, it is only a translation of his work by another hand, and this translation a very barbarous one, as learned men, in general declare†. 3. It deserves consideration that *Irenæus* might use the word, translated *infantes*, rather in a proper, than a vulgar sense. Now in a proper sense, the state of *infancy* extends to the age of seven years; and many have been converted before that age. Monsieur *Danet* extends it to *fourteen* ‡. And Dr. *Gale*, after Mr. *Dodwell*, (who is also followed herein by Mr. *Whiston*) has offered very probable arguments, to prove that *Irenæus* himself extended it to *ten*§. The laws of *England* call all persons infants who are under the age of *twenty-one*. Hence it is evident, that every argument founded on *Irenæus*’s use of this word, must

* See *Gale’s Reflect.* p. 465, 476. *Kees’s Animadversions* on Dr. *Ridgley*, p. 258, 259.

† See, among others, *Dupin* in *Irenæus*, and Dr. *Gale*, p. 476—480.

‡ *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiq.* on the words *Ætas* and *Balneæ*.

§ *Gale’s Reflect.* p. 501, *Wall’s Def.* p. 351, 352.

be very precarious. The word used by the apostle *Paul* to *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. which our translators have rendered *child*, is very properly translated an *infant*; and perhaps no word can be found more proper to translate it by than *infans*; here used by the translator of *Irenæus*. Several have translated the words of *Paul*, *from infancy*.* But *Timothy* could never be such an infant at the time *Paul* refers to, as we mean in our vulgar use of the word. Few *baptist-ministers* would be backward to baptize such an infant as he was, when he *knew the holy scriptures which were able to make him wise unto salvation*. Should it therefore be granted that by *renascuntur* is meant *baptized*, it can never be improved into an argument, that *infant-baptism*, as now practised, was in use in the time of *Irenæus*. 4. Though the *fathers* pretty commonly in after times, used the word *regeneration* for *baptism*, yet it must be owned, I think, that *Irenæus* did sometimes, if not always, use this word in a different sense, and consequently, *he* might do so here. And many learned men suppose, that this manner of speaking did not obtain in the church so early as the time of *Irenæus*.† To which we may add, 6. That I think two things in *Irenæus's* manner of speaking, shew,

* Vide *Vulg. lat.* and Dr. *Doddridge* in loc. and *Leigh. crit. sac.* and *Pas. lex. in verb.* Βρεφός.

† Compare *Gale's Reflect.* p. 489—498. *Gill's Inf. Baptism an Innovation.* *Doddridge on Regeneration.* Postscript to Preface, p. 10, 11. 3d edit.

this could not be his meaning here. He says they are *regenerated by Christ to God*. But I can neither see truth nor sense in saying persons are *baptized by Christ to God*.—He says too, that Christ came to save ALL these, who are *renascuntur*. Now it can by no means be admitted, either that Christ saves *all* who are *baptized*, or that he saves no other. Whoever has been prevailed on to admit the latter, I believe none were ever unguarded enough to assert the former.

But take (*renascuntur*) *regenerated* in the plain scripture sense, for *renewing of the mind*, and we make the good father speak a very important, awful, and affecting truth; since, how dreadfully soever it is disregarded, it is clear beyond all possible room for dispute, (and let all unregenerate sinners consider it!) that all who are thus *born again*, will be saved by Christ; but all others will inevitably and eternally perish. But from these things it is manifest, there is no proof in this passage of *Irenæus*, that *infant-baptism* was practised in his day.

Tertullian lived and wrote before *Origen*. He was *presbyter* at *Carthage* in *Africa*, and flourished about the year 200. But he speaks expressly against *infant-baptism*. After arguing upon it a while, he infers thus, “Therefore let them come, says he, (namely, to be baptized) when they are grown up; let them come when they understand; when they are instructed whither it is that they come; let them be
made

made Christians when they can know Christ, &c*." From hence, it is with great probability supposed that *infant-baptism* began about this time to be moved for in *Africa*, which *Tertullian* seeing, began to oppose it; since no hint concerning it, nor reference to it, untill his time, can be produced.

Origen, before mentioned; who flourished about 230, is the first writer pretended to speak expressly in favour of this practice. And what is cited from his work, mentions it as the usage of the church, and an apostolic tradition.

* Veniant ergo, dum adolefcunt; veniant dum discunt, dum quo veniant doceantur; fiant Christiani cum Christum noſſe potuerint. *Tert. de. bap. cap. 18.* I well know what has been ſaid concerning the clause (*ſi non tam neceſſ*) found in *Pamelius's* edition of *Tertullian*, and, as he owns, taken from *Gagnæus*, becauſe he thought it moderated the opinion of *Tertullian*, with regard to *infant-baptiſm*. From this clause, it has been intimated that *Tertullian* allowed of *infant-baptiſm*, in danger of death, &c. But ſome learned *pædobaptiſts*, as well as *anti-pædobaptiſts*, have ſaid ſo much to ſhew the impertinency and impropriety of this clause, that I believe few perſons of judgment, now, will think theſe to be *Tertullian's* words; or that it is neceſſary, any more ſhould here be ſaid concerning them. See *Gale's* Reflect. p. 511. and *Gill's* Inf. Bapt. an innovation. I may farther add, I think it can be no proof that *infant baptiſm* was now in uſe, becauſe *Tertullian* wrote againſt it. It is enough if it now began to be moved for; ſince we have obſerved before, page 23, it was publicly decreed by the council in 8:6, that dipping ſhould be *always* uſed in baptiſm. Now none, I imagine will ſay that aſperſion was then practiſed in *England*; but only began to be moved for. And for the ſame reaſon for which the council might then publicly oppoſe it, when only moved for, *Tertullian* might write againſt it.

But there is great reason to believe, these were not *Origen's* words; because, 1. What is cited to this purpose, is only from the *latin* translation of his works, some of which were translated by *Jerem* and *Ruffinus*, who flourished about 140 years after. But they took so much liberty to add, leave out, or alter, what they pleased, that the learned in general declare, these translations are not to be trusted, because in reading them, we know not whether we read the works of *Origen* or his translators *. Nothing is produced from his *greek* works that seems to favour the practice. That learned and honourable writer, Sir *Peter* (afterward, Lord chief justice) *King*, has indeed produced a passage from *Origen's* Comment on *Matt.* xviii. 10. which is supposed to speak of the baptism of little ones;† but *Origen* says, they are such little ones, as, *desire as new born babes, the sincere milk of the word, &c.*‡ which is an evidence of the baptism of *believers* at that time; but has nothing to do with *infants*. 2. A learned writer, has produced two passages from *Origen's* *Greek* works which speak directly for *believer's* baptism, and even so as to exclude that of *infants*: § which one could not have expected, had the passage

* Vide *Dupin* in *Origen* and *Ruffinus*. *Gale's* Reflect. letter 13. *Gill's* Inf. Bapt. an Innovation, p. 24—27. *Lardner's* Credib. part 2. vol. 3. p. 210, &c.

† Inquiry concerning the Constitution, &c. of the Christian Church, part 2, p. 58.

‡ *Wall's* Hist. v. 1. p. 64. *Gale's* Reflect. p. 520.

§ *Dr. Gill* ut supra, p. 28, 29.

above mentioned, as cited in favour of *infant baptism* been his own. And the same author observes, * “ that no writer before or after *Origen*, till the times of *Jerom* and *Ruffinus*, ever spoke of *infant-baptism*, as the usage of the church, or an apostolic tradition; nor did even *Cyprian*, who came after him, and pleaded for it, ever quote *Origen* as saying this; nor does *Austin*, who long after, pleaded for the practice as apostolic, ever appeal to *Origen*’s testimony of it.” All these things make it very probable, that these words never came from *Origen* but his translators. *Cyprian*, Bp. of *Carthage*, who flourished about 20 years after clearly speaks in favour of it. One *Fidus*, having some scruples about the time of administering it to an infant, i. e. whether before the 8th day, or precisely on that day, after the manner of *circumcision* (which by the way, I think, proves that it had not been of long standing in the church.) It was considered of in a council of sixty-six bishops, who concluded it may be administered at any age; of which *Cyprian* gives *Fidus* an account.† At this time, therefore, it is clear enough that *infant-baptism* did prevail in *Africa*; and so did *infant-communion*,‡ and many other inventions of men,§ which the present *pædobap-*

† Ibid, p. 27.

‡ *Cypr. Epist. 59, p. 137. Pamel. ed.*

* *Vid. Cypr. de lapsis, p. 244.*

† See some of these mentioned by *Tertullian*, de corona militis, c. 3, 4. p. 101, 102.

tists, especially among the protestants, do not at all admit of. Yet I believe one might venture to say, and it would be easy to prove, that we have as much authority for them, both from scripture and antiquity as for the baptizing of infants.

It may, perhaps, be of use to some reader, if we here mention the state of the controversy, and the chief point in dispute between us and our brethren, the *pædobaptists*; in order, as far as may be, under a divine blessing, to prevent, or put an end to, *vain jangling*; that none of us for the future, may spend precious time in attempting to prove what needs no proof, or be weak enough to deny what every body of judgment and candor will allow. So far as I can apprehend, the following particulars will point it out. 1. It is not disputed whether the scriptures, and antiquity, at least for the first six centuries, speak of some who were baptized after believing. This is allowed on both sides. 2. Nor whether baptism be properly administered by immersion; and may be vindicated both by scripture and antiquity. This is equally clear and universally allowed. 3. Nor whether ALL infants ought to be baptized. I believe none will plead for this. I must own, I fear we have not been accustomed to speak very intelligibly on this head; yet I think none will attempt to vindicate the baptizing of *all* infants; nor of any, but those born of believing parents. 4. Nor is it disputed whether those who have never been properly

perly baptized before, ought to be baptized upon their believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is allowed on both sides, that they ought. 5. Nor whether we have any express precept or precedent in scripture, or the writers of the two first centuries, for baptizing infants. I believe none will pretend we have so much as one. 6. Nor whether we have any express account in scripture, or the writings of the two first centuries, of any being sprinkled, and that sprinkling called baptism. I believe none will pretend that there is one instance of it. 7. Nor whether *infant-baptism* did prevail and get ground in the church, in the third and following centuries. Both parties allow that this was the case. But, 8. The points in debate, and to be determined, are, whether there be any passage in scripture from which it is necessarily inferred that baptism ought to be administered to the infants of believers, and whether sprinkling is proper baptism*. For, those who baptize infants,

own

* When these two points are determined, it will be easy to decide; whether or no we ought to baptize those persons upon their believing in Christ, who have only been sprinkled in their infancy; since it seems ever to have been a settled and uncontested principle in the church, that no unbaptized person can be admitted to the *Lord's Supper*, or esteemed a regular *church-member*. See for proof of this, besides numberless other writers, *Justin Martyr*. Apol. p. 97, 98. Bp. *Pearson* on the Creed, p. 337, 338, 339, 343, 10th edit. *Lord King's Inquiry*, &c. part 2, p. 56. Dr. *Wall's Hist.* vol. 2, p. 449. Now as we are assuredly persuaded that no one

has

own that they do it not from a plain and express scripture; but from *inferences* drawn from some passages. And I ask leave to say, I think those inferences should be very evident, and quite incontestible, or else we should not venture to found any practice upon them, especially a practice which causes another to be set aside, which is founded upon plain and express scripture, as the baptism of believers most evidently is. However, those on the other side, do assert that those inferences are not just, nor fairly drawn from those scriptures; that they are evidently contrary to our Lord's commission, and the practice of *John the baptist*, and of the *apostles*. Whether have the better side of the argument, and the better foundation for their practice; and whether proceed more safely, the reader must judge, If these few pages shall be any way helpful to him in passing this judgment, so that any upright enquirer is instructed, any weak mind established, any article of divine truth set in a scripture light. I would give the glory to the blessed God, to whom I recommend both them and the reader, when I have offered a few words to those strange and unaccountable persons, who profess to be followers and servants of the Lord Jesus, yet own the truth of

has any scripture authority to baptize infants, and that sprinkling is not baptism, nor has any relation to it, it is quite unreasonable to accuse us of uncharitableness for admitting none to church-fellowship until baptized by immersion.

what

what is above said, and that believer's baptism is agreeable to scripture, but live in the neglect of it, notwithstanding. Their chief objections are such as follow.

1. "We have been baptized with the holy spirit, and therefore need not be baptized in water." The Rev. Mr. *Wesley's* remarkable expressions may be an answer to this*; commenting on *Peter's* words, *can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, who have received the holy Ghost*, he says, "He does not say, they have the baptism of the spirit, therefore they do not need baptism with water. But just the contrary: If they have received the spirit, then baptize them with water. How easily is this question decided, if we will take the word of God for our judge? Either men have received the Holy Ghost or not. If they have not, *repent saith God, and be baptized, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*. If they have, if they are already baptized with the Holy Ghost, then *who can forbid water?*" I hope those who regard this eminent gentleman in other things, will also regard him in this note: and will consider how evidently and directly they contradict, not only Mr. *Wesley*, but the apostle *Peter* himself, when they make the baptism of the spirit (allowing the propriety of the phrase) an objection against their being baptized with water.

2. But say these persons, "It is a small matter, and signifies little or nothing whether we

* Note on *Acts* x. 47.

attend to it or not." This is not a place to consider the importance of this divine institution at large: but let me ask these men; do they consider how they dishonour the great and blessed God, by intimating that he hath given a command so small and insignificant, that it matters little whether they attend to it or not? Will an earthly master be so treated by a servant, who is only his fellow-creature? If it is but a small matter, yet they allow it as a small matter; consequently the neglect of it must be a small sin. But can they be satisfied, or do they imagine the Lord will be pleased, that they should live in the practice of a small sin? Do they not remember, that Christ calls it a part of righteousness? * And do they esteem it a small matter whether they be followers of Christ, and whether they fulfill all righteousness or no? Have they not heard that the Lord esteems a neglect of this ordinance, *a rejecting of the counsel of God against themselves?* Luke vii. 30. And is this a small matter? Do they not know that omission of known duty, is a *rebellion* which God esteems *as the sin of witchcraft*; and a *stubbornness* that is as *iniquity and idolatry?* 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23. And do they esteem this a small matter? May the good Lord open the eyes of these poor creatures, and give them to see their delusion and their sin, *that they may recover themselves from the snare of the devil, who,* so far, as this is the language of their hearts,

* Matt. iii. 15.

with regard to any known duty, *are* most evidently *led captive by him at his will!* 2 Tim. ii. 26. Let me leave with them the words of him whom they pretend to serve, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the thing that I say?* Luke vi. 46. And address each of them in the language of *Ananias*, to one whose religion did not lie all in outward appearance, and empty flash, but in subjection of the whole heart to the will of God, without which, all pretence to religion is a vain dream, a mere nothing, and all supposed elevations, only the delusions of Satan; to one, who did not place his religion in these, it was said, *Acts xxii. 16. Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord*, even the ADORABLE JESUS, to whom with the FATHER, and HOLY GHOST, one unchangeable God, be endless praise, and unreserved obedience. Amen.

E R R A T A.

Page 20, ref. aliisque locis, read Stennett. P. 36, note, 4. r. comparing; l. 7, r. Quest. 20. 4. P. 58. l. 15, r. be. P. 68. l. 30, r. call.

STRICTURES

ON THE

Rev. STEPHEN ADDINGTON'S

L A T E

S U M M A R Y

O F T H E

CHRISTIAN MINISTER'S

R E A S O N S

F O R

BAPTIZING INFANTS,

A N D F O R

ADMINISTERING THE ORDINANCE BY
SPRINKLING OR POURING OF WATER.

IN TWO LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR.

By D A N T A Y L O R.

*Beware lest any Man spoil you, through Philosophy, and
vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Ru-
diments of the World, and not after Christ. COL. ii. 8.*

LONDON: Printed by J. W. PASHAM, Black-Friers;
And Sold by G. KEITH, Gracechurch Street; E. and C. DILLY,
Poultry; T. VALLANCE, Cheapside; and J. MATHEWS,
Strand. 1777.

S T R I C T U R E S

ON THE

Rev. Mr. *Addington's* Summary, &c.

L E T T E R I.

Reverend SIR,

AS my *Essay on Baptism* is now a second time in the press, notwithstanding my settled aversion to controversy, I have so far yielded to the solicitations of those I ought to respect, as to present you with a few strictures on your late *Summary*. I hope you will read them with candor, and if they, in connection with what my *Essay* contains, shall give any light to the subject in debate, I trust you will make that use of it which may naturally be expected from a serious upright minister of Jesus Christ, who desires to “ap-
“ prove himself to God” as such, and who is earnestly intent upon “keeping the or-
“ dinances

“ dinances as they are delivered unto us” in the word of truth.

Your former publication, intituled, “ The Christian Minister’s Reasons, &c.” was put into my hands, soon after its appearance, with an earnest request that I would make some remarks upon it. But my great disinclination to dispute, my various avocations, and my hopes that it would be undertaken by some abler hand, appeared sufficient reasons for refusing compliance with that request. Compliance therefore I did refuse. But I rejoice to see that the task has been undertaken, and nobly executed, by the good Dr. *Stennett*. His work, however, though in my opinion excellent, is too large for the lower class of readers. If the *Humble Essay*, with the few following remarks, should be thought in any degree worthy to supply his lack of service for the lowest of the people, to prevent the pernicious consequences which I am fully persuaded your late performances are calculated to produce, I shall think myself happy in having presented them to the world. I should be very sorry, my good Sir, to give you any reasonable cause of disgust; yet I hope you will please to excuse it if I do not fill my paper with superfluous compliments. You are, for what I know, an useful minister; but you need not be reminded that you are capable of being mistaken. And mistaken I am persuaded you are, and that in a matter of considerable moment. My reason

reason for this persuasion will be learnt from my *Humble Essay*, and from the ensuing remarks on your *Summary*.

To me I confess there appears something singular, and very defective in your description of Christian Baptism. "It is an ordinance in which water is administered, &c." I beg you would favor us with an explication of it—a proof of its propriety—and a demonstration that this is an adequate account of the ordinance. I, at present, take it for granted, as a matter that has often been fully proved, that baptism is immersion, and that *Christian* Baptism is the immersion of that person in water, who gives credible evidence that he believes in Jesus Christ*. You inform us, "it signifies the putting on of Christ—and spiritual purity, &c." But these expressions again are vague and indeterminate. Do you mean that the ordinance, or the minister, or parent, signifies herein to the child, that he has put on Christ, or ought to put him on? That he is, or ought to be thus spiritually pure? How can this be done to an infant? Do you mean that the person baptized signifies that he has put on Christ, and is spiritually pure? Neither can this be applicable to infants. The passages you refer

* See Dr. Stennett's Letters on Baptism, Vol. 1. N. 2. 4. and *Humble Essay*, on Christian Baptism, 2d Edit. p. 1—17.

to have plainly this latter sense*, and consequently they most evidently oppose the practice of *infant baptism*.

“ By baptism,” you tell us, “ those who have been baptized are avowed the nominal disciples of Christ.” Pray, good Sir, who avows infants the nominal disciples of Christ by baptism? Do ministers? Do parents? By what authority? Please to inform us, with proper evidence, wherein a baptized infant is a disciple of Christ, either nominal or real, more than one who is unbaptized. “ The ordinance,” you say, “ is a sign of internal sanctification, and is intended to remind us of the necessity of it.” But if we admit this, baptism cannot answer these purposes to infants. They can have no idea of a sign. They are not possessed of internal sanctification; nor are they capable of being reminded how necessary it is. But, admitting the justness of your account of baptism, it is obvious there is a peculiar propriety in administering the ordinance to believers.

We have the happiness of agreeing with you, Sir, that baptism is a “ standing ordinance, and ought to “ be continued throughout all “ ages;†” but cannot so cordially assent that it signifies “ the influences of the Spirit,” or is designed for that end, unless you can shew us where this is written in the scriptures. In

* Gal. iii. 27. 1 Cor. xii. 13. † Summary, p. 6.

the same page you tell your reader that those who administer baptism by plunging, "generally confine it to adults." Ought you not rather to have said, to those who appear to repent, and believe in Jesus? For you know we are not concerned about the age, but the spiritual state of those we baptize.

You say truly that "the Scripture expressly declares, there is but one baptism;" and your inference from this apostolic position is also true, that "the second washing of a person who has been once baptized, can by no means be properly called baptism." (I suppose you mean Christian baptism). If it can be proved that the sprinkling of an infant's face with water is proper Christian baptism, it is certainly wrong to baptize them again. But I never yet saw this proved, nor ever expect to see it proved. On the contrary, if it be evident that the only baptism authorized in Scripture, is the immersion of believers in water, it must follow from your own reasoning, and it is a manifest truth, that the sprinkling of infants is not proper Christian baptism.

You suppose it improbable that our Lord should impose the practice of immersion on his disciples, because of the indecency, burdensomeness, frightfulness, and hurtfulness of it. But, surely, Sir, you cannot be so much a stranger to mankind, as not to know that cold bathing is now become so common; so much applauded, and so generally beneficial,

that all your prudent and thoughtful readers, will require some evidence of what you here insinuate, before they can possibly believe that there is any thing “ indecent, burthen-
“ some, terrifying, or hurtful ” in the practice against which you militate*.

You next would persuade your readers that the word βαπτίζω does not signify to *dip* or *plunge*, though that this is it's proper import, has been so often fully shewn by some, and confessed by others, even of the Pœdobaptists themselves; yea, though the best critics generally give this sense of it; though the best ancient Greek writers constantly used the word in this sense, and though no man can produce a fair evidence of this idea being excluded from it, in one single instance in their writings†. In order, however, to accomplish your design, you refer to three places of Scripture‡. With what success, a little close

* “ The usual methods of baptizing by immersion might not, perhaps, 1800 years ago, be offensive in Judea, nor can we say that it would disgust the uncultivated and unclothed inhabitants of the South of Africa even now.” Mr. Addington's Christian Minister's Reasons, &c. p. 13. “ If Mr. A. had ever been at Bath, Southampton, &c. he would have known, that for men and women properly clothed, to bathe promiscuously, and in public, is not considered as indecent, by people in general, in this island.” Dr. Stenner's Answer, vol. 1. p. 31, 32.

† See this proved at large by Dr. Gale. Remarks on Wall, letter III, &c.

‡ Dan. v. 21. 1 Cor. x. 2. Heb. ix. 10.

attention

attention will discover. You first mention the case of Nebuchadnezzar, *Dan. v. 21.* He, you inform us, when sprinkled with the dew of Heaven, is said (in the Greek translation) to have been baptized by it*? But where is the proof, Sir, that our English word *wet*, or the Greek word *εβαπην* is designed to represent the *descent* of the dew? The text itself has nothing like it. Rather the word describes the state of Nebuchadnezzar's body, who, by lying abroad in the open air, was, as it were, immersed in the dew. To demonstrate the propriety of this application of the word, and interpretation of the text, I ask leave to propose the following queries. It is not well known, by every person of sense and learning, that in the countries where Nebuchadnezzar's dominions lay, and in all countries in the same latitude, the dews are very abundant? God has wisely and graciously so ordered it, as a supply of moisture to those hot countries; and by which they are remarkably fertile. It is not evident, that as Nebuchadnezzar laid abroad with the beasts in the open fields, he would hereby be very *wet* as if he had been immersed in water? Would it not have been very low, and have greatly enfeebled the strong and picturesque language made use of, in this description, if the Prophet had only meant to tell us that the dew *sprinkled* Nebuchadnezzar?

zar? Is it not reasonable to imagine that in such a description as this, the inspired penman would use such a word that most naturally conveyed the idea of that remarkable quantity of dew with which Nebuchadnezzar's body was wet? Could any word more naturally convey this idea than one which denoted immersion? Can any words be produced which more strongly and more naturally convey the idea of immersion, than the Chaldee word ܕܡܥܩܝܠ, and the Greek word ἡμερῶν, here used by the Prophet Daniel, and the seventy? Will any man deny, that the Chaldee word here used by Daniel properly conveys the idea of immersion? Is it reasonable to suppose that the seventy did not understand the import of this Chaldee word? Must we not then suppose that they have translated it by a Greek word of like import? Is it not evident therefore, to any upright and candid reader, that this text is so far from affording an argument to prove that baptism may be administered by sprinkling, that it very clearly proves the contrary?—Concerning the Israelites, you say that “sprinkled by the fall of rain from the clouds, and the dashing of the waves, &c.” they “are said to have been baptized unto Moses.” But pray, Sir, where did you obtain this extraordinary intelligence, that they were thus sprinkled by the fall of rain. When your authority for this assertion is produced, what you say may be attended

attended to. 'Till then I leave it with the impartial reader, for the sake of brevity*, and pass on.

That the various washings or baptisms of the Jews, mentioned *Heb.* ix. 10. were "many," or any of them, "performed by sprinkling," is equally destitute of proof, and cannot rationally be admitted. Not one of your readers can find any evidence of it in the passages from which you say "it appears†."

"It has been thought by some, that John "baptized our Lord, and others, and that Philip "baptized the Eunuch in this way," (*i.e.* by immersion). This, Sir, is a great truth. It has been thought so by *some*; or rather many; all Christians, except a very few of late, have been fully assured of it‡. No man who has not arrived at an extraordinary degree of effrontery can deny that baptism was administered "in this way," in the first age, and many ages after. If there be any faith in history, any meaning in words, or any method of understanding the plainest and simplest narrations that ever were penned, this was certainly the case. "The very word "baptize signifies to dip; and it is *certain* "that the rite of dipping was observed of

* See *Exod.* xiv. 19—23. and Humble Essay, p. 17.

† "It appears," Mr. A. says, "from *Lev.* viii. xi. "xiv. 14 first verses, and other places, p. 8.

‡ See Humble Essay.

“ the ancient church*.” “ Baptism was wont
 “ to be administered in the time of Christ
 “ and his Apostles, not by sprinkling but by
 “ immersion†.” There is no room for *think-*
ing in the case, Sir; it is as certain that bap-
 tism was thus administered in the apostolic
 and many following ages, by the Christian
 church in general, as it is certain that it ever
 were administered at all.

“ The force of the argument, taken from
 “ the expression of his baptizing in Jordan,
 “ depends entirely on our English transla-
 “ tion of the Greek preposition‡.”—No, Sir,
 not *entirely*; but on what every one will al-
 low to be the *natural signification* of that pre-
 position, in such a *connection*, together with
 the proper sense of the word *baptize*. I be-
 lieve yourself will not pretend, nor any man
 else, that the Greek words do not fairly and
 naturally signify, that they *were baptized in*
the water; nor will you pretend to find any
 other preposition in the Greek tongue that
 more naturally and more evidently conveys
 this idea. This interpretation therefore
 being confirmed by the native and genuine
 import of the word βαπτίζω, and by many
 clear historical facts, related in the New
 Testament, with the greatest simplicity, must
 be a sufficient warrant for the Baptists and
 for every man to assert, that John plunged
 our Lord and others in the river Jordan.

* Calvin.

† Mastricht.

‡ Page 9.

That preposition, you tell us, “ might properly have been rendered at Jordan,” Suppose we admit this with respect to *εν*; can you, Sir, furnish us with clear proof that *εις τον Ιορδανην**, may properly be rendered at Jordan?—“ Though he,” (John), “ took his disciples to the river, it is no where said that he plunged any of them in it.” Yes, Sir; when it is said he *baptized* them in it. For “ it is acknowledged by all the world, that to *baptize*, signifies to *plunge*†.” “ Baptism is *immersion*, and was formerly celebrated according to the force and meaning of that word†.” “ The word *baptize* signifies to *dip*‖.” “ It properly denotes *immersion* for the sake of dipping§.” “ The propriety of the word, as well as the places chosen for the administration of the ordinance, and the many allusions of the Apostles to it, which cannot be referred to sprinkling, shews that it was the custom to administer it by *plunging*, and not by pouring of water**.” “ The manner of baptizing was to plunge, or dip into the water, as even the word βαπτίζειν itself plainly enough shews††.”—In short, if words have any determinate ideas included in them, it is so evident that John *plunged* his Disciples, that it will not admit of a fair dispute.

* Mark i 9. † Bp. Bossuet. ‡ Salmasius.
 ‖ Calvin. § Beza. ** Grotius. †† Casaubon.

You strangely mistake yourself respecting the Jewish priest, *Lev. xiv. 4—8.* who, you say, “ was ordered to take the leprous to a “ running water, only to sprinkle the water “ upon them.” The bird was to be killed over the running water, and the man to wash himself in it.—As to your conjecture with regard to those whom John baptized in Jordan and Enon, it is too fanciful to deserve a reply.—Your play upon the Greek preposition *απο** can never serve your purpose, unless you can prove that baptism is not immersion, and that this preposition does not naturally denote our Lord’s coming *out of* the water, and that *αυς*, in *Mark i. 9.* does not properly signify *into*; which it is certain you will never be able to do, nor any man else.

Are you not very conscious, Sir, of misrepresentation, or great inattention, in the case of Philip and the Eunuch? Do the Baptists say, that “ he must have been immersed in the “ water, because it is said he went into it, “ and came out of it?” I hope not. Surely they have sense enough to know that a man may go into the water, and come out of it, and not be immersed in it. Rather they say, because both Philip and the Eunuch went into the water, and then, when they were both in it, Philip baptized the Eunuch. The word baptize signifies *immerse*; and if Philip only sprinkled the Eunuch, why should they both have the trouble of going into the water,

when it might have been as easily, and much more conveniently performed, without it? But—" what is said of one, is said of both ; " they, (the expressions) assert the immersion of both, or of neither."—How, Sir? do they assert that the Eunuch baptized Philip, after they were both gone down into the water*? Do they not assert, that Philip baptized the Eunuch after they were both gone down into the water? When this is considered, and replied to, your next paragraph will, perhaps, require an answer. 'Till then, it is unnecessary.

But on the following one †, I ask leave to enquire, where do you read that " Saul was " baptized in the house of Judas," or, that " the kinsmen and friends of Cornelius were " baptized in his house?" This, Sir, is the invention of man, not the truth of God. But if it were asserted in scripture, you certainly are sensible it could be no proof that these persons were not immersed. You must know that private baths, as well as public ones, were so common among the Jews, and Gentiles too ‡, that it is a great pity you should so far debase yourself, both in point of learning and probity, as to talk of there not being " a tub in either of their houses."—With the

* See *Acts* viii. 38, 39. † Page 11.

‡ " It is strange that the use of bathing, as a part of diet, is left. With the Romans and Grecians, it was " as usual as eating or sleeping." *Lord Bacon's Nat. Hist.* cent. viii. experiment 740. See also *Humble Essay*, p. 26, and the notes there.

like ungrounded assurance, you intimate that the jailor and his family were baptized in his house, without the least warrant from the sacred text; nay, even though the text mentions their going into his house, after the ordinance was administered.—Much like the former is your next argument from *Acts* ii. 41*. It is not said those three thousand were “all baptized in one day.”—If it were, there is no good reason to believe they were “all baptized by the twelve Apostles,” since the seventy disciples, who were preachers, and who baptized at other times, were then at Jerusalem.—And had even this been the case, where is the impossibility, in a place so full of baths, pools, and lavers, as Jerusalem was, of one man baptizing 250 persons in a day’s time. Men have often performed much harder tasks than this would have been; and pray, where is the great difference, as to time, between immersion and sprinkling?

If you can give any scripture proof that the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, or the pouring down of the Holy Ghost are alluded to, and represented in the mode of baptism, your next two paragraphs shall be attended to; till then, the considerate reader will think a reply to them unnecessary. By what mode of argument will you prove, Sir, that verse 13, of *Heb.* ix. is an explication of verse 10? Unless this is proved, (which will not, I think,

easy, however confidently asserted,) it will still be most natural to explain *divers washings*, (Gr. baptisms) as refering to the various bathings of priests, levites and people, and the different ends and purposes of such bathings, as they are explained by *Spencer*, *Grotius*, *Whitby* and others*. These few brief hints may, I think, be sufficient, as to what is material in the first part of your *Summary*. How you may approve of them, I cannot tell. Be that as it will, I wish every needful blessing to attend you, as a man, and as a minister, and am,

Reverend Sir,

Your ready servant,

Hirst, for Jesus' sake.
July 4, 1777.

DAN TAYLOR.

* Vide *Spencer de Legibus Hebræorum*, v. ii. p. 1004. quarto edit. *Grotius* and *Whitby* in loc, and *Poli Synopsis*, in loc.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

Reverend SIR,

TH A T baptism is to be administered to such as are converted—to christianity I have the pleasure to agree with you in believing and asserting ; but that it ought to be administered “ to the infant offspring of Christian believers*.” I cannot see how to grant, without contradicting the word of truth. My reasons are given more at large in the *Humble Essay*, to which I venture again to refer the reader, and shall here only take notice of what is advanced in your *Summary*, and not particularly considered there.

When Christian parents “ dedicate their “ children,” or whatever they possess, “ to “ God,” in a scriptural manner, he certainly will “ graciously accept of such dedication ;” but how this can have any relation to baptism, unless he have appointed that they shall be dedicated to him in that ordinance, I confess I am not able to imagine.—That the children of believers may and do enjoy some blessings in consequence of their parents faith, I will not deny ; but neither does this seem to have connection with that sacred institution.

I wish, Sir, that you would explain to us a little more clearly what you suppose that covenant is which the blessed God makes with believers, and in what sense, and how far; he makes the same covenant with their infant-offspring. 'Till this be done, all dispute about it with respect to baptism, seems to me like throwing dust in the air to prevent persons discerning the plain path in which they ought to walk. Having, however, elsewhere said what I think needful on the subject*, I here only add, that it is very certain neither covenants nor any thing else besides the divine appointment, can lay a proper foundation for determining who are the subjects of baptism.—Another question I trust you will permit me to ask: How can it be made appear that those who baptize their infants “devote or dedicate them to God,” more than those who do not†? The compassion which Jesus manifested to children is evident, and it is sweet and delightful to think of it. It is also very certain (and O, that it were more seriously thought of!) that none can enter into the kingdom of Heaven who are not born again. Nor am I at present inclined to dispute whether infants “are capable of” the new-birth, in the scripture-sense of that phrase; because that question seems to me to have no connection with the subjects of baptism, which you call “the appointed sign

* See Humble Essay, p. 47, &c.

† See p. 16, &c.

“ of it*,” (*i. e.* of the new birth). But I should be glad to be informed in *what sense* you understand that baptism is a “ sign of “ the new birth.” It may then be considered whether infants are capable of attending to that ordinance in a scripture way or not. By the bye, however, the question is not what infants are capable of, but whether our Lord has authorised us to baptize them. If he have, they are certainly “ proper subjects” of baptism. Otherwise, it is certain they are not.

It is very amazing to me, and I think, to many others, that you should refer to *Rom. xi. 16*, as a passage which “ authorizes infant “ baptism.” Excuse me, Sir, in saying that I greatly wonder a minister of the gospel is not ashamed of a cause which stands in need of supports so far fetched, and so feeble as this and some others you make use of. Can you think that *branches* here, intends the infant offspring? Can any man imagine that it would be to the Apostle’s purpose to have any regard to baptism in this text? Where can the evidence be that the word “ holy” is “ used to express either a privilege, or a qualification for privileges?” or that one of these privileges is baptism, or a scripture-right to it. If these things cannot be proved, the reader is only amused with words. Your work and mine, Sir, is to instruct mankind,

and not to throw dust in their eyes, in order that we may play with them undiscerned.

I have elsewhere given my thoughts on 1 Cor. vii. 14.* But I here beg leave to ask, Sir, by what mode of argument you will make it appear that “the question upon which the
“Apostle gives his opinion was, whether, if a
“Christian man or woman married an unbeliever, their offspring were not to be considered and treated as a Christian offspring†?” Certainly, nothing is more clear from the Apostle’s reasoning, than that this is not the question. Your remark upon this text, that “Paul pronounces the children of unbelievers
“unclean, and those of believers holy,” is also a strange and unaccountable oversight: If words have any meaning, Paul pronounces those children *holy*, one of whose parents is sanctified by the other, even though one parent still continue an unbeliever.

As my thoughts on circumcision, the Abrahamic covenant, &c. are given also in the *Humble Essay*‡, I pass this over here. Only I must say, it is somewhat remarkable that you have not given us *all* the promises of God to Abraham. Why, Sir, did you pick out the 7th verse of *Gen.* xvii. || and omit the 6th and 8th? Had you given us a full account of this covenant, the reader might have judged for himself at first sight, whether the

* See *Humble Essay*, p. 62—73.

† Page 18.

‡ See *Humble Essay*, p. 44, &c.
read *Gen.* xvii. 5—10.

|| Page 19.

Abrahamic covenant, and the covenant of grace be *the same*. We may, however, appeal to your own expressions, even when you are shewing the *sameness* of these two covenants. "The land of Canaan promised in one, was a type of a better country, viz. a heavenly one promised in the other*." Now, my good Sir, is the type and antitype the same? Is Canaan the same with Heaven? And can that be the same covenant which promises only an earthly Canaan with that which promises an heavenly one? Consequently, must it not be a great absurdity to argue the practice of infant baptism from that of circumcision? "The institutions and privileges of the Mosaic ritual were national and temporary, but the covenant of grace made with believers in Christ, is personal and everlasting." Here, again, Sir, I have the great pleasure of agreeing with you. But then, were not these "institutions and privileges of the Mosaic ritual" included in the Abrahamic covenant? And was not circumcision one of these institutions? Can circumcision then be properly said to belong to the covenant of grace? The plain truth is, spiritual and eternal blessings were promised to Abraham as a believer; yet they were not derived to all his natural posterity, but are enjoyed to the end of time by all true believers; who are therefore called the child-

* Page 19.

ren of Abraham*. Now these promises and circumcision were not necessarily connected. Many were circumcised who had never any interest in these promises, nor were supposed to have. Otherwise all the carnal Jews, as they were circumcised, would have been saved; which, surely, no man in his senses will assert. It must therefore be a glaring impropriety to speak of circumcision as “a seal of the covenant of grace.” From these considerations it is evident that the reasonings in the 22d page of your *Summary* are totally without foundation.

That “baptism comes in the room of circumcision” can never be proved. It is never intimated in scripture. There are many convincing arguments against it†, which, if you think it practicable, I wish you would undertake to answer. It cannot be that the Apostle “speaks of baptism as the circumcision of Christ, *Col. ii. 11.* ‡ unless baptism be administered *without hands*. The resemblance you mention between baptism and circumcision evidently fails||. There is no place of scripture where baptism is appointed to be administered “to those who were converted, and to their households.” It is granted that the Apostles did, in some instances, baptize households. But those very instances shew

* See *Rom. iv. 13, 14, 16, 24.* *Gal. iii. 29.*

† See *Humble Essay*, p. 44, 45, 46. *Dr. Stennett's Letters*, No. ix.

‡ Page 23.

|| Page 23.

that such households were converted; or, at least, the accounts of them make it very probable.—The circumcised Jew, and baptized Christian were not “taught to look upon themselves as separated from the world, as “holy unto the Lord” in the *same sense*, as must be evident to every reader of the Bible. Nor was circumcision “a token of the covenant of grace” to infants, as we have shewn above. In these things, Sir, you have taken for granted what you ought to prove; but the proof is beyond the power of any man living. My thoughts on the commission, are given in another place*.

If any of the baptists object, as you say “it is objected, that children are not expressly mentioned in these instructions of our Lord to his ministers,” I confess I think it is weak in those baptists. But I know of no baptists who mention this as an argument sufficient to invalidate the authority upon which this practice is founded. It is, indeed, asserted on their side, and granted on the opposite side, that there is no express mention of it in our Lord’s instructions. But if any thing in those instructions will fairly extend to infants, we ought to dispute against it no longer. But we insist upon it that the practice is contrary to the clear and obvious meaning of those instructions; and there is not one just rule of interpretation by which

* Humble Essay, p. 36, &c.

they can be proved to be included in those instructions. You must be sensible to argue from hence, that we have no authority to “ baptize women, or even men,” because “ neither are expressly mentioned in the “ command,” is very unfair. You know “ we must baptize somebody. You and all men will allow that the commission authorizes the baptism of believers; that we read expressly of believers being baptized in obedience to the commission, and these believers are expressly said to be *both men and women**. Now, Sir, if you or any other man, can produce this evidence in favor of infant baptism, we give up the point. But you are conscious, all considerate men are conscious that this evidence cannot be produced in favor of infant baptism. My thoughts on what your next paragraph contains are given elsewhere†. As to what you say on *Acts* ii. 38, 39. it is sufficient to observe here, that you and all men of understanding must allow, that the English word *children* and the Greek word *τεκνους*, signify *posterity*; and that the promise is so limited to those whom *God shall call*, that infants cannot be included: and then, that this limitation must be admitted, otherwise all the posterity of believing Abraham would be saved, which is an absurdity that no man can admit, but one who is *non compos mentis*. By the bye, however, if your

* See *Acts* viii. xviii. &c. † Humble Essay, p. 43, 44.

fense of the text were established, it is impossible that the practice of infant baptism should be vindicated from it.—Nor does this infer any limitation of saving spiritual “privileges” under the gospel, more than under the “law*.” Such privileges never were indiscriminately granted to the children of believers, either under the law, or the gospel, as is evident from what is observed above. Your distinction between *is*, *was*, and *shall be*, is unnecessary and useless upon this explication of the text.

As to the *inutility* or *hurtfulness* of infant baptism, canvassed with a view to establish or refute the notion of it's being of divine authority†, I look upon these topics to open a field for useless squabble, in which he who has the most fruitful invention will probably come off conqueror. If the practice be of divine authority, it is certainly useful. If not, it must be unprofitable, and even hurtful. — That “Christ has no where com-

* Page 26.

† I speak thus because I freely grant, that when a practice is once shewn to be unscriptural, the hurtfulness of it may properly be demonstrated, in order to expose the silly notion of its being a matter of indifference, and to deter weak persons from giving into it. In this view, I wish success to attend every judicious attempt to demonstrate the hurtfulness of *infant baptism*, which is, I am confident, one of the most pernicious human traditions, that ever proceeded from the corrupt heart of man, or deformed the beautiful order of a gospel church.

“manded

“manded infant baptism,” is certainly a strong objection against it, if it be considered as a positive institution of Christianity; because if Christ have not commanded it, it is not his institution; and consequently it is an invention of men. But that Jesus should say, “in so many words, Let infants be baptized,” is not necessary, if it can be proved that the commission which he gave his Apostles, plainly extends to infants; or that they certainly baptized infants in obedience to that commission. But if one or the other of these cannot be proved, it is most certain that the practice has no foundation in scripture.

That those scriptural expressions in which faith and repentance are required previous to baptism, “are little to the purpose for which they are produced*,” ought to be proved as well as asserted. You very truly say, that “faith and repentance are required of adult-converts from heathenism, &c.” You are right also in saying, “that the Apostles baptized adults is very certain;” and if they required faith and repentance by divine authority of these adults, it is very natural to conclude that they did not afterwards baptize their children,” unless some passage of scripture can be produced by which they were authorised to require faith and repentance of these adult converts, and to baptize

their children without such requirement ; and such a passage cannot be produced. You must certainly be out in attempting to invalidate this kind of reasoning by saying, “ We “ might with equal reason say that children “ were not circumcised because their parents “ were.” Why, my good Sir, certainly no one is silly enough to reason thus ; “ Children “ were not baptized because their parents “ were.” Children might be baptized, and their parents too, if the Lord had commanded it. And you know it is expressly recorded in scripture, that children were circumcised, but it is not recorded there that children were baptized. Besides, we never read, that I know of, that either faith or repentance was required of those adults who were circumcised. But you yourself grant that faith and repentance were required of adult converts in order to baptism. So that you see, the cases are quite different.

I think your remarks upon laws, customs, legacy, and deeds of gift, are much more fanciful than solid. It is granted, “ a testator says in his will, I give this estate to “ such a one and his heirs* ;” and this establishes the title of the heirs to the estate. But then, the blessed God never says, “ Let such “ persons be baptized and their children.” If this were said, the title of children to the ordinance of baptism, would be equally clear

and firm. Nor does the Lord ever "say to his people" with respect to spiritual and eternal happiness, "I will be a God to you, and your seed." I will venture to affirm, Sir, though you hang so much upon it, that the sentiment itself; and every attempt to establish it, are big with absurdity, and with mischief to the souls of men. And yet, if this sentiment could be established as it cannot, it would never furnish out a substantial argument in favor of infant baptism. "If faith and repentance had been indispensable pre-requisites to baptism." Nay, my dear Sir, you have just now granted that "they were pre-requisites in adult-converts." And if this was of divine authority, as I believe no one will deny, then they were certainly *indispensable* pre-requisites. But if they were, "our Lord himself on one account, and Simon on another, would have been improper subjects for the ordinance." Our Lord, you know, was the great institutor and pattern of the ordinance, and therefore out of the question. You will grant it was proper that he should be our example in the other institution, the Lord's supper. Yet I trust, you will not deny that faith and repentance are indispensable pre-requisites to that ordinance. Suppose Simon was an improper subject; that proves nothing. He appeared to be a proper one when the ordinance was administered; and many others have been admitted to both ordinances upon

a credible evidence of faith and repentance, who have afterwards manifested themselves to be very different to what they appeared at first.

If you, or any other can make it appear that our Saviour did really authorize his Apostles to baptize any without faith and repentance, or that the Apostles did baptize any whom they knew to be without, your practice will then appear to have some foundation, and your 31st page will demand our attention. Till then we must pass it by. "Propriety, capacity, signs, tokens, &c." with regard to the foundation of the ordinance now in question, have nothing to do with scripture; and therefore we have nothing to do with them.

You ask, "Has not baptism been generally administered to children in the several ages of the church*." I answer, no, Sir, it has not. Not in the first or second ages of the church. No man ever proved, or will ever be able to prove that it has†. As to Dr. *Lightfoot's* reason for the silence of scripture, respecting infant-baptism, I pass it over here, having considered the argument from proselyte baptism elsewhere‡.

It is evident the households you mention do not supply one single instance of infant-bap-

* Page 31.

† See, on this subject, *Humble Essay*, p. 73, &c. *Dr. Stearnett's Letters*, v. 2. No. 15. and others.

‡ See *Humble Essay*, p. 51, &c.

tism, or one fair argument to support the practice of it, not even with your ingenious management of what is related concerning them. On the household of Lydia, you justly observe, “ we read nothing of the faith or “ ages, (*age* rather) of any one of her family.” How then, my good Sir, will you prove there were infants in it? If you cannot do this, it cannot be imagined to afford an argument in favor of infant baptism. You must know there are multitudes of households in which are no infants, and every circumstance in the history of Lydia and her household, renders it probable that her’s was one of this kind: Equally void of evidence in your favor, is the household of Stephanas, 1 Cor. i. 16. So also is that of the Jailor, even with your extraordinary criticism upon it. By what method of argument, or rules of grammar or criticism, Sir, do you disprove the common translation of *παιδοι*, *with all his house*; and by what authority do you support the contrary one, *in (or over) all his house*; in opposition to the generality of the best critics and commentators? And yet, could you support this translation, and disprove the other, to which I hope, you will never pretend, yet even in that case, you have no evidence that any infants were in the Jailor’s family, and consequently no foundation for the practice of infant baptism. Is it not then very strange, Sir, that you should oppose Dr. Lightfoot, and so many other pœdobaptists,

pædobaptists, by asserting that “the New Testament is not silent upon this head?” Pray, Sir, where is the passage in which infant baptism is mentioned? Multitudes, I am persuaded, even of pædobaptists, must be ashamed of such an assertion as this. I will conclude the argument by a few words from two or three writers out of many in proof of what I say, who are of your own side, strange as it is to think of!

“Pædobaptism, in the two first centuries after Christ, was unknown, but in the third and fourth was approved of by a few, began to prevail in the fifth and subsequent ages; and therefore this rite is indeed observed by us as an ancient custom, but not as an apostolical tradition.”—*Curcellæus*, *Dissert. Secund. de peccat. orig.* § 56.

“In the two first ages no one received baptism, unless he who, having been instructed in the faith, and imbued with the doctrine of Christ, was able to testify that he believed.”—*Suicer. Thesaur. Eccl. sub voce Συναξις.*

“None were baptized of old, but those who were of age, who not only understood what the mystery of the water meant, but desired the same.”—*Ludovicus Vives*, *Comment in August. Lib. i. cap. 27.*

“It is against the perpetual analogy of Christ’s doctrine to baptize infants; for besides that Christ never gave any precept to

“ to baptize them, nor ever himself, nor
 “ his Apostles, that appears, did baptize
 “ any of them,—all that either he or his
 “ Apostles said concerning it, requires such
 “ previous dispositions to baptism, of which
 “ infants are not capable, and these are
 “ faith and repentance.” —Bp. Taylor on
 Proph. p. 239.

You know, Sir, and every man of reading knows, that these are but a very few out of many pædobaptists, who freely confess that they can find no authority for, or account of, infant baptism in the scriptures. I shall only refer to one more, who is yet living; an author whom I well know, and whom I have long esteemed. His words are these, speaking of the apostolic times, and practice. “Nor was
 “ *baptism* itself the first declaration of their
 “ being Christians, for *none* was admitted to
 “ *baptism*, much less to the *supper of the*
 “ *Lord*, without a previous confession of
 “ faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as is manifest in the instance of *Philip* and the *Eunuch*, *Cornelius* the Gentile, the *Sailor*; &c.”
 —Rev. Mr. T. Knight, Amyntas and Philetus, p. 210, 211.

I cannot but think, Sir, that these authors, were they all now living, would smile at a man who should assert that “the New Testament is not silent upon this head,” infant-baptism. Every man who has carefully read the New Testament, if he have any tenderness of conscience, or regard for truth, must
 confess

confess, I apprehend, that it knows nothing about the matter. It does not seem to have come into the thoughts of any person concerned in it, nor of any person that lived till a considerable time after it was finished.

I ask your pardon, Sir, if I presume so far as to offer you a word or two of advice, which, if attended to, will, I think, be of service to yourself and your readers, should you think proper to resume this controversy, or to take up any other. I give it so far as I know, with due respect to your person and character.

I advise you then, my dear Sir, to read the passages of scripture carefully over, which relate to the subject you are upon : and try to be impartial, and to divest yourself of prejudice. Consider yourself in the sight of that God who trieth the reins and heart, and to whom we must quickly give an account of all our thoughts, words and works.

Do not be positive in asserting without evidence, nor take things for granted without proof ; especially the things which you know are denied by your opponents. This often unnecessarily prolongs the debate, and excites a disposition, not the most happy, or most honourable to the Christian character ; and is, in short, unfair, and unworthy a minister of Jesus Christ.

Do not lead your readers to imagine that your opponents say such things as you know they do not say ; nor represent your adversaries knowingly,

knowingly, in an unjust light. Make *Matt.* vii. 12. Your rule in your treatment of others. This is honourable and like a man. Do not confound the argument, and darken the judgment by noise and declamation, or far-fetched remarks; nor put off your readers with possibilities, or even probabilities, in the place of certainty and positive evidence; nor impose upon the ignorant with unmeaning or equivocal phrases. But let the world see that you are willing to be thoroughly known, and esteem it an honor to be set right, if you are wrong.

You see, my good Sir, I use the same familiarity I would do if I had the honor, and the great pleasure of your company in my own parlour. I have imagined, however, that these advices were very needful, while I have run over your *Summary*; though to avoid offence, I have seldom seemed to observe it. May you, and may I, and may all who bear the sacred character of ministers, be daily learning more and more, to imitate the blessed Jesus, our only hope, and to be more and more his meek and upright followers, under the enlivening consideration that he spilled for us his precious blood, and hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps! This is the constant prayer of,

Reverend and dear Sir,

Your affectionate brother,

And ready servant, for Jesus' sake,

DAN TAYLOR.

Hirst, in Wadsworth,

July 12, 1777.

ERRATA.

Page 8, note, l. 11, read Stennett's. P. 9. l. 16 and 23, r. ls it. P. 10. l. 11, r. יצטרע P. 17. l. 1, r. *be* easy. P. 21. l. 9. dele not. P. 30. l. 27, r. profelyte.

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COMPENDIOUS VIEW
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OF
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM,

FOR THE USE OF PLAIN CHRISTIANS.

Occasioned by the late and present Controversies on
that Subject.

By D. TAYLOR.

+++++

Ask for the Old Paths—and walk therein.

JEREMIAH.

+++++

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W. ASH, LITTLE TOWER STREET, J. MARSON,
HIGH HOLBORN, T. SCOLICK, CITY
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A COMPENDIOUS VIEW, &c.

COMMON christians cannot enter far into the intricate parts of a controversy. With these they are often confounded; and though they are frequently no more than the appendages of the subject in dispute, yet they perplex the weak reader, till he is ready to forget the main question, which, when carefully attended to, is generally plain and easy. This, I think, is in some measure, the case, with regard to the controversy on *Christian baptism*. I have long thought so; and my mind was peculiarly struck with this apprehension, by reading a late pamphlet on the subject. This gave birth to the small publication now put into the hands of the reader. The design of it is to state the nature and importance of baptism in an easy light; and to collect what appears to be essential to the controversy into a narrow compass. How far this design is accomplished, the reader will judge for himself.

That baptism is an ordinance of Jesus Christ is agreed on all hands; and therefore to suppose that it does not deserve and demand our serious and diligent attention cannot but be an affront to the *Lord of Glory*, the acknowledged author of it.—That it is an institution of the New Testament is

equally certain ; and therefore we must directly advert to what that infallible and infinitely precious book teaches concerning it. To do this, with as much brevity as possible, has often been useful on various subjects ; and may possibly not be unprofitable on the present occasion ; especially to those simple, upright minds, who sincerely desire to know their duty, and to perform it, that they may “ stand complete and perfect in all the will of God.” Col. iv. 12. Which is certainly the desire of every real Christian.

I confess myself a Baptist for conscience sake. But it is no part of my design to be engaged in disputation with any man on that head. I cannot but apprehend, however, that if any man who practises the sprinkling of infants, should choose to take the same method, on *that* side of the question, and in the same compendious and simple manner, state the evidence which he apprehends, the New Testament gives in favour of that practice, the plain reader would, perhaps, see with ease, the line of his duty ; and then he may act as he hopes to give up his account to God ; who will soon “ bring to judgment every work, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.” Eccles. xii. 14.

In the mean time, far from condemning those who choose to controvert the point in all its extent, I sincerely wish the divine benediction to rest on all who, on either side of the question, are endeavouring to “ speak the truth in love.”

Question I. Who are the persons to whom the ordinance of baptism ought to be administered ?

Answer.

Answer. On all other subjects we think it safest to consult the precepts and examples which relate to them. This is confessedly the safest, most natural, and most unexceptionable method, on the subject now in hand. We therefore make the following observations.

1. John is the first person of whom we read in scripture, who administered baptism to his disciples. He is therefore emphatically called "John the baptist."

2. A few months before our Saviour began his ministry, John "preached in the wilderness of Judea;" and the people whom he baptized were such as "confessed their sins." Mat. iii. 1, 6. Mar. i. 5. Nor do we find that he baptized any others, except our blessed Redeemer, who "knew no sin." These could not be infants. If infants had any sins to confess, they are not able to confess them.

3. When our Saviour was baptized he was not an infant. He "began to be about thirty years of age." Luke iii. 23. He was therefore an example of adult baptism; but not of infant baptism.

4. After his baptism, our Saviour began to preach; and he "made and baptized more disciples than John." John iv. 1. This expression clearly intimates that these people were *made disciples* first, and then baptized. But can an infant be made a disciple of Christ? Certainly not. Yet this expression was used with the utmost propriety of those who were *converted* by our Lord's ministry. Our Lord therefore baptized *converted persons*; but we cannot find that he baptized one infant.

5. Before our Saviour ascended into heaven,

he gave his apostles this commission. "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Mat. xxviii. 19.—It is certain the phrase all nations, does not necessarily include infants, (see 1 Chron. xiv. 17. 2 Chron. xxxii. 23. Psal. lxxii. 11, 17. Mat. xxiv. 9. Acts xiv. 16. Rev. xiv. 8. &c. &c), the commission clearly signifies "teach them first, and then baptize them."—It is certain this had been our Lord's method—and we shall soon find that the apostles so understood it, and practised accordingly. This commission, therefore, cannot be supposed to authorize the baptizing of infants, but of those who are *taught*.

6. At Jerusalem, many were "pricked to the heart," by the preaching of Peter. Acts ii. These "said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter answered; Repent, and be baptized every one of you—Then they that gladly received the word were baptized." Ver. 37, 38, 41. It is evident these were not infants.

7. "Philip went down to Samaria, and preached Christ to them.—And when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts viii. 5, 12. Infants could not *believe* these things. They could not, therefore, be here included.

8. Towards the end of the same chapter, we read of the baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch. Ver. 35—40. It is certain he was not an infant.

9. In the ninth chapter of the Acts, the conversion and baptism of Saul, afterwards Paul the Apostle,

Apostle, are related ; and in the twenty-second chapter, he informs the multitude that when he was converted, Ananias said to him, “ arise and be baptized.” Ver. 16.

10. We read, in the tenth chapter, that Peter preached at Cefaria ; and “ the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.” Ver. 44. On which Peter said, “ Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we ? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” Ver. 47, 48. *Here* those who were baptized, had first “ heard the word, and received the Holy Ghost.” Not infants ; but believers.

11. Paul and his companions went to Philippi ; and “ a certain woman, named Lydia—was baptized, and her household.” Acts xvi. 14, 15.—Whether this woman had a husband, or children, or of whom her family consisted, we are not informed. We can only conjecture from circumstances. All men know that there are many families in which there are no infants ; and that of Lydia might be one of those. There is no account of her husband or children. It is natural to conclude that, at least, her husband would have been mentioned if she had one ; and that the household would have been called *his*, not *hers*. This is usual on other occasions. It is therefore very probable that she had neither husband nor child. Her family appears to consist of persons who are called *brethren*, and were *comforted* by the Apostles. Ver. 40. These expressions are not applicable to infants. At any rate, this is an instance of believers’ baptism ; but affords no evidence in favour of infant baptism.

12. At

12. At Philippi another household was baptized; that of the Jailor. Paul and Silas “spake the word of the Lord to him, and to all that were in his house; and he—was baptized, and all his straightway;—and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house.” Acts xvi. 31—34. Such expressions are incompatible with the state of infancy. The apostles could not, with any propriety, “speak the word of the Lord” to infants. Nor could infants “believe and rejoice in God.” This household then, affords a striking instance of the baptism of believers; but no evidence of infant baptism.

13. Paul preached at Corinth eighteen months; in which period “many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.” Acts xviii. 8, 11. They first heard; then believed, and were baptized. So that those baptized at Corinth were believers, not infants.

14. In 1 Cor. i. 16. Paul says he “baptized the household of Stephanas.” Concerning this household we only know that it was “the first fruits of Achaia;” and that they had “addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.” 1 Cor. xvi. 15.—This, however understood, cannot be applied to infants.

From these observations we fairly, and even necessarily conclude—that baptism is an ordinance of Jesus Christ—that believers, and believers without exception, are the subjects of it.—That we have not found a hint that gives authority to baptize infants—Not a word concerning baptizing believers, and their children. It would appear a great defect in the sacred History, that it has not recorded the baptizing of infants, if any such thing

was practised. On other occasions, when children are concerned with their parents, they are mentioned with them. (See Mat. xv. 38, &c.) Can we suppose it would not have been so here? But no such thing is mentioned, nor can fairly be inferred from any one passage in the whole New Testament. The conclusion is, we have no authority to believe that any such thing was practised.

It is of no consequence to say “the first christians were Jews and heathens, who embraced a new religion; but now, since christianity is the religion of our country, the faith of the parent gives his child a right to the ordinance of baptism.” Because it is certain we have no such instructions as these in scripture—It is also certain that if the parent’s faith give any such right to his children at this day, it gave them this right in the days of the apostles. If it had, in the days of the apostles, given this right to children, surely the sacred writers would have mentioned it; and they would have informed us, that on this principle, they baptized the children of believers. But of this we have no intimation in any part of scripture. Much less can we suppose that the *name* of christian gives any such right; though this must be supposed and proved, before we can plead for the baptizing of all infants in a christian country on that foundation.

That we ought not to baptize infants, and that believers ought to be baptized might be evinced much more largely: But these few pages are designed for the plainest christians; and it is sufficient for these to remember that we have no command to baptize infants, nor any example of it in

all the scriptures. On the other hand, we have both express commands and examples, not a few, to warrant the baptism of believers.

Quest. II. What is *Christian baptism*? Is it *sprinkling*, or *immersion*?

Ans. It has been, and still is, very generally acknowledged by learned and candid men, that baptism is *immersion*, and that to baptize is to *immerse*. The design of this little piece forbids me to cite many authorities. If the reader wish to examine the truth of what I have asserted, I do, with great pleasure, refer him to Mr. Booth's *Pædobaptism Examined, Second Edition*; and shall here only quote the words of a few, whose judgment cannot be disputed; and who could not be under the power of prejudice in favour of believers baptism.

"Baptism is *immersion*; and was administered in ancient times according to the force and meaning of the word."

SALMASIUS.

"The word baptize signifies to *immerse*."

CALVIN.

"Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which word it is certain *immersion* is signified."

HOSPINIAN, and BEZA.

"The act of baptizing is the *immersion* of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word. Thus also it was performed by Christ and his apostles."

VITRINGA.

"In England of late years, I ever thought the parson *baptized his own fingers*, rather than the child."

SELDEN.

"To baptize signifies to *plunge*, as is granted by all the world."

Bp. BOSSUET.

My

My reader is not supposed to be a critic in the learned languages. But he can read his New Testament, and judge whether the accounts of baptism given in that infallible book are more agreeable to the notion and practice of *sprinkling*, or of *immersion*. In order to this, we make the following remarks.

1. John baptized in the river Jordan. Mat. iii. 6. Mar. i. 5, 9. Do persons use to sprinkle others in a river? Would a man appear wise who went into a river to sprinkle another? Can we think that John would act so imprudently? But if he *immersed* the people all is clear, wise and natural.

2. "John was baptizing in Enon—*because* there was *much water* there?" John iii. 23. Observe the reason; "*because* there was *much water* there." Is this reason satisfactory if he sprinkled the people? Would that require *much water*?—Would not one single spring, or small rivulet be sufficient? But the reason is a good one, if he *immersed* the people. He then wanted much water. There was much water at Enon; and therefore he baptized at that place. It is therefore natural to conclude that John *immersed* the people; and that to baptize is to *immerse*.

3. Our Saviour was baptized in the same famous river. Mat. iii. 13—17. Mar. i. 9. Would he be *sprinkled* in a river? If he were *immersed*, a river was quite convenient, and proper for the purpose. But if he were sprinkled, we should think it would have been performed in any place, in a parlor, a hall, a kitchen, a synagogue, the temple, any where, rather than in a river. Common sense, and all history will confirm this. I think no man can produce an instance from any history,

of people going into a river to be sprinkled, nor was it ever supposed, that I know of, unless in the case of Jesus and his disciples, and those of John the Baptist. Can we imagine that they would be so remarkably singular; and, without necessity, act, in this instance, contrary to all other men?

4. When Christ was baptized, “he went up out of the water;” a further proof that he had been *in* the water; and therefore, a further evidence that baptism is immersion.

5. As Philip and the Eunuch “went on their way, they came to a *certain water* ;”—and “he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both *into* the water; both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up *out of* the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.”

If baptism had been *sprinkling*, why was not the Eunuch baptized till they came to this *certain water*? If a balon of water could not have been obtained in the way almost any where, it is a well known fact that persons of dignity in those desert countries, always took water along with them in their baggage. A small quantity of this would have been sufficient for the purpose of sprinkling.

When they were come to this *certain water*, they both went down *into* it; and then Philip baptized the Eunuch. Here a plain reader will ask as before. Why did they both go down *into* the water? Was it prudent if the Eunuch was only *sprinkled*? Would two wise men go into a water for such a purpose? If *sprinkling* were *baptism*, would not Philip have sprinkled the Eunuch? and can we suppose that, in these circumstances, Phi-
lip

lip would have gone into the water to have done this?

6. The word is sometimes used in a figurative sense. Let us refer to these passages.

Our Saviour says, "I have a *baptism* to be baptized with." Luke xii. 50. That here, and in Mat. xx. 22, our Lord refers to his sufferings is allowed on all hands. But why does he call these sufferings a *baptism*? The answer which divines agree to give, and which is very obvious, is, because he was, as it were, overwhelmed with his sufferings, as a person, when baptized, is overwhelmed or covered with the water. They explain it to this purpose. "I have a most dreadful baptism to be baptized with, and know that I shall shortly be *bathed*, as it were, in blood, and *plunged* in the most overwhelming distress." Thus we frequently say that a person in great trouble is overwhelmed with grief, immersed in calamity, and so on.

Now was there any thing in the sufferings of our blessed Redeemer which resembled *sprinkling*? If not, these words contain a certain proof that sprinkling is not baptism. Was there any thing which resembled *immersion*? There certainly was. He might truly say "I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." Psal. lxi. 2. If immersion be baptism there is a striking propriety in the expressions; but if sprinkling be baptism there is no propriety, because no resemblance.

Before our Lord ascended into heaven, he made a famous promise to his disciples. "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts i. 5. This promise was fulfilled
about

about ten days after; and the history of its fulfilment is this. "There came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind; and it filled all the house where they were sitting.—and they were filled with the Holy Ghost." Acts ii. 2, 4. This is called a *baptizing*. Does the state of the disciples at this time resemble the state of a person sprinkled with a few drops of water? Certainly not. Does it then resemble the state of a person *immersed*? Would it be improper to say the disciples were *immersed* in the Holy Ghost? It *filled* the house. They were *filled*, *surrounded*, *covered* with it. It was evidently a resemblance of immersion; and the passage affords a solid proof that baptism is *immersion*.

Consider another passage. 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.—"All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." The apostle refers to the state of the Israelites, Exod. xiv. 21, 22. A bright cloud was over them. The sea became dry land; and they went into the midst of it on dry ground. The waters were a wall to them on both sides. In this situation they surrendered themselves to the direction of Moses, who, by divine appointment, was engaged to conduct them to the promised land.

Moses was an eminent type of Christ, as a prophet and lawgiver; Acts iii. 22, 23. and as the people surrendered themselves to the conduct of Moses, so a true believer, in the ordinance of baptism, humbly and confidently surrenders himself to Christ, as the teacher and head of the Church, to be conducted to heaven in the way of universal holiness.

Consider

Consider the *situation* of the Israelites. They were in the *midst* of the sea; and the cloud over them. Thus they resembled a person immersed or covered in the water, when he is baptized. But there is nothing in the relation which can induce us to conceive that sprinkling is baptism.

Believers are "buried with Christ in baptism." Rom. vi. 4. Col. ii. 12. It is, I think, generally allowed on all hands, that "the apostle here alludes to the ancient manner of baptizing by *immersion*." Nor is it easy, in any other way, to account for the expression. That *immersion* resembles a *burial*, none will deny; but will this be asserted of sprinkling? If not, the apostle cannot here allude to *sprinkling*. Consequently not sprinkling, but immersion is christian baptism.

The plain reader then will judge whether these passages do not confirm what so many learned men on both sides have asserted; that "baptism is *immersion*." He will also judge whether it be not, from hence evident, that those who have only been sprinkled have not been baptized; and whether the baptists be not abused when they are called *Anabaptists*.

Quest. III. Is not baptism a standing ordinance of Christ; as necessary to be observed *now* as in the primitive ages?

Ans. Yes; Christians in general have thought it so, in all ages; and insisted on the necessity of it; and this justly, for the following reasons.

1. It was not only practised by John the baptist, but also by our Saviour and his apostles, both before and after our Lord's resurrection; and was administered both to converted Jews and Gentiles,
by

by our Lord's direction. This we have seen already. Nor is there any intimation in scripture, that it should ever be laid aside, either in the apostolic, or in any future age.

2. The promise annexed to the commission of our Saviour plainly intimates the permanent duration of the ordinance. "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Mat. xxviii. 19, 20.

3. It is connected with duties, both of ministers and people which are evidently of equal importance *now*, as they formerly were. Nor have we the least intimation that these duties and baptism should ever be separated, or the connection between them dissolved. With respect to ministers, it is connected with *teaching* and *preaching the gospel*. Mat. xxviii. 19. Mar. xvi. 15, 16. As it respects hearers, it is connected with believing and repentance. This is plain from the preceding quotations. Now teaching, preaching the gospel, believing and repentance, are all necessary in every age; and therefore so is baptism; which is connected with them, unless we had some intimation that this connection should be dissolved; which we have not.

4. Baptism answers all the purposes at this day which it answered in the first age of christianity; and these are needful *now* as they were *then*. A sensible writer, (Mr. Jenkins) in a little piece, entitled "The Beauty of Believers Baptism" has recounted these various ends of baptism. Whether we fully agree with him in all he asserts, or no, it cannot be denied, that baptism answers *many* of the purposes which he has mentioned. It is evident

dent also that these always continue the same, and are always necessary. This affords an incontestible proof of the perpetuity of christian baptism.

Quest. IV. Although we allow that baptism is *immersion*, and that believers were immersed in the first ages, by divine appointment; yet, is there any harm in changing the practice, so far as to administer it to infants, and to *sprinkle* rather than *immerse*?

Ans. It is certainly wrong, for the following reasons.

1. We find no intimation in scripture that any such change should ever be made. Such a change is therefore the contrivance of man, and cannot be pleasing to the great head of the church, who most justly requires that we "do whatsoever he commands us." John xv. 14.

2. The christian dispensation is the last dispensation given to men. Every dispensation has its peculiar positive institutions. A change of ordinances supposes a change in the dispensations to which the ordinances respectively belong. Believers' Baptism is both peculiar and suitable to the christian dispensation; and fully answers the purposes for which baptism was designed. Infant baptism is neither appointed in the christian directory, nor can it answer the purposes of christian baptism. This, I think is clear from the Passages before cited. Now as there is no new dispensation since that of Christ, there can be no foundation for a change of ordinances. Consequently, the sprinkling of infants, instead of the immersion of believers,

ers, admitting that to be christian baptism, cannot with impunity, be introduced.

3 The scripture is our *only* rule in matters of religion. This is allowed in other parts of religion, and if so, why not in this? On this principle we are reformed from popery. Why have we left that corrupt church, if it be lawful to change any part or mean of religion? What right have we to make a change in this instance more than in others? Christian baptism is one part of the counsel of God; and the counsel of God ought to stand.

4. To make a change in a divine institution, is virtually to call in question the wisdom of God, who appointed it. For if we make a change, we pretend it is for the better. Is not this, in effect, to say, that we have found out a better way than God has appointed; and consequently we are wiser than he?

5. To make a change in a divine institution, is, in effect, to assume an authority which belongs to none but God, who, alone has a right to direct in matters of religion. If we act as we please, we are putting our selves in the place of God Almighty, or setting ourselves in opposition to him. If another command me and I obey his commands, without a divine warrant, I evidently call that man my *master on earth*, and submit to him, as though he were my Maker.

6. If we change a sacred ordinance, we alter or annul the design of it. Ordinances are means to answer certain ends. But when an ordinance is changed, the ends designed cannot be answered; because the different practice is not adapted to the accomplishment of them. We might exemplify

plify this observation, by many instances. But the object now before us calls us to apply it to christian baptism; and our intended brevity requires the *confinement* of it to that ordinance. It clearly appears to me from Rom vi. 4, 5. Col. ii. 12. 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21, that christian baptism was, besides other reasons, designed to be a standing representation of the burial and resurrection of Christ, and a profession of our death to sin, and recovery to holiness. But sprinkling a child with water neither does, nor can possibly answer these ends. This argument will apply to almost every sacred institution, whether moral or positive. To change an ordinance, therefore, is, so far, to defeat the design of the blessed God, who appointed it, and to change the ordinance of baptism from immersing a believer to sprinkling an infant, is to defeat the design of God in appointing that ordinance.

7. To change the ordinance of baptism from the immersion of believers to the sprinkling of infants is to annihilate the ordinance itself. No instance can be produced, in which, either by precept or example, the scriptures authorize the sprinkling of infants. If sprinkling were baptism, no instance can be produced, from scripture, of infants being the subjects of it. If infants were the subjects of it, no valid authority can be produced in proof that baptizing signifies *sprinkling*. Now there is only ONE BAPTISM; and therefore, where the practice of sprinkling infants is adopted, christian baptism, which is quite a different thing, is totally lost.

8. To

8. To change an ordinance is to betray the trust which God has reposed in his church. The church is "the pillar and ground of the truth."—1 Tim. iii. 15. The truth is a sacred depositum committed to the church to be kept and maintained against all opposition. Phil. i. 17, 27. 2 Tim. i. 13. ii. 2. Jude 3. &c. If we give up or alter any part of the will or *counsel of God*, we act deceitfully and treacherously in the trust which he has reposed in us.

9. To change a divine ordinance is represented in scripture, as a crime of great enormity. Paul commends the Corinthians, because they "kept the ordinances as he had delivered them" to that church. 1 Cor. xi. 2. Awful threatenings are denounced by the prophet Isaiah, xxiv. 5, and one of the crimes on account of which the threatenings are denounced is, "they have changed the ordinance." Whatever ordinance is intended, the lesson we are taught is that to change an ordinance is a great sin. When two of the sons of Aaron made a change in one single circumstance, in the offering of incense, "there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them."—For, saith Jehovah, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." Lev. x. 1, 2, 3. This passage is sufficient to make one tremble at the thought of altering, in any degree, a sacred institution, or of conforming to such an alteration, when it is made by any man, or number of men in the world.

Quest. V. What *necessity* is there that believers should be baptized?

Ans.

Ans. Though baptism does not “wash away original sin,” nor make any one “a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven,” nor “bring any one into the covenant of grace,” nor is it “a seal of the covenant of grace,” as some have incautiously asserted; yet it is of great importance, and cannot be neglected with impunity, for the following reasons.

1. To suppose it an indifferent thing is to degrade the author of it, the *Lord of glory*, as an indifferent person. If baptism be a *trifle*, the blessed Jesus who observed and enjoined it is a *trifler*. All duties derive their importance, in one view, from the authority and dignity of him who appointed them. To diminish the importance of a duty, is, so far, to degrade him who made it a duty. If the least command of parents, or masters of families be treated with indifference, the slight terminates on the master himself. Shall Jesus be thus slighted? God forbid!

2. Baptism is one part of *righteousness*. Mat. iii. 15. It cannot then be neglected without guilt. Mat. v. 19. It becomes all the followers of Christ, as it became Christ himself to “fulfil all righteousness.”

3. It is the duty of believers to be baptized, in order to act consistently with their profession.—“Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say,” is our Saviour’s Query. Luke vi. 14. “We all ought to put this Query to our own consciences.

4. Baptism is enjoined by the same authority, by which other duties are enjoined. It is therefore, in this respect, of equal importance with all other

other duties. So the apostle James argues on another occasion. He that said "Do not commit adultery, said also Do not kill." James ii. 11. On the same principle we may argue on this head. He that said "Pray without ceasing—Do this in remembrance of me," said also "Repent and be baptized—Arise and be baptized." If our Saviour be worthy of regard in any thing, he ought to be regarded in every thing.

5. Jesus is our *example*; and he was baptized, not when he was an infant, but when adult; and was *immersed*, not *sprinkled*. This is evident on the face of scripture, and few have been hardy enough to deny it. To imitate Christ in the imitable parts of his conduct, is the summit of a christian's ambition.

6. Baptism is so plain a duty that professing christians have *generally* acknowledged the necessity of it. Now there is but ONE BAPTISM. The sprinkling of infants can never be proved to be christian baptism. Both the actions and subjects are essentially different. This we have seen above. If believers be not baptized, then, we entirely lose one of Christ's institutions. Would any christian wish that one of the words of Christ should *fall to the ground*? It follows that though baptism is not of that importance which many have asserted, both in the established church, and among the protestant dissenters, yet it is by far too important to be neglected by any servant of Jesus Christ.

7. The primitive christians, so far as we can learn, uniformly attended to this ordinance. No instance can be produced of any who were converted,

verted, in the apostolic age, and were not baptized. We are bound by the same authority, are under the same obligations, and have the same rule as they. We are accountable to the supreme judge, as well as they; and ought to follow their example in this, as in other parts of duty.

8. Baptism is "the answer of a good conscience towards God." 1 Pet. iii. 21. We cannot pretend to be christians, without a good conscience; nor to have in ourselves, nor give to others, any substantial proof of our conversion to Christ, unless we act in such a manner as corresponds with a good conscience. But we cannot pretend to this, in the allowed neglect of baptism, or any other known duty. Under this conviction, it is the evident duty of every believer, to make a cordial surrender of himself to the Lord Jesus Christ, in the ordinance of baptism, according to his appointment and example.

9. To neglect John's baptism was "rejecting the counsel of God." Luke vii. 30. As the baptism of Christ, is, at least, of equal importance with that of John, no believer ought to neglect it, lest he be found guilty of the same crime.

10. Jesus Christ has given it as the characteristic of his *friends*, that they "do whatsoever he commands them." John xv. 14. Every believer, therefore, ought to shew himself a friend of the Lord Jesus, by *universal* obedience. If the baptism of believers be one part of his commands, as we have seen above that it is, we ought to practise that, as well as every other command.

May

May the divine blessing accompany the reading of this small performance; and may the name of our God have all the glory! AMEN.

F I N I S.

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